Coventry pay the penalties from Molby's boot

Alan Dunn's DIARY

JAN MOLBY, Liverpool soccer club's Danish midfield player, last week knocked on the head that old adage about lightning never striking twice. In fact, so far as Coventry City are concerned, it comes by the bootful. In midweek he scored with each of three penalty kicks to give Liverpool victory over City 3-1, then followed up with the first goal, also from the penalty spot, when the two teams met again on Saturday in the League. Liverpool won 2-0, leaving City unhappy about one or two refereeing decisions and still without a win in 20 years at Liverpool's Anfield ground.

But Anfield was not an entirely happy place last week, especially among the club's supporters. Some of them are increasingly concerned at the projected transfer of the club's freescoring centre forward, Ian Rush, to Juventus, of Italy, for £3.2 million. There were demonstrations at the ground at the weekend, with claims in part that Rush had not wished to leave. Rush later confirmed that he had not wanted to go, but had assumed once Liverpool allowed talks to go ahead during the summer that the club had no objection to his going. Perhaps some of the anxiety being expressed by the supporters is the knowledge that Rush has scored 188 goals in his 299 games for the club . . . and that this season's rise of the London club, Arsenal, might be the herald of a switch of soccer power from Merseyside to the capital.

Certainly Arsenal can do no wrong at the top of the First Division. Their manager, George Graham, new to the job this season, keeps protesting that his squad of players is not large enough nor experienced enough to win the championship this season — and the squad keeps trying to prove him wrong. The team did it again at the weekend, winning 4-0 at Aston Villa. Graham likes to concede that his strategy is based on a sound typical Scots defence . . . Scottish in meanness.

Graham himself played 12 times for his country during his days with Arsenal, Chelsea, Aston Villa, and Manchester United and others. But if the defence have conceded only eight goals in 17 games the attack have hardly been passive observers, scoring 27 times. It is a young squad, with four newcomers this season still to reach 21, all being brought up in the Graham style.

The weekend's games left the state of play unchanged at the top of the First Division, with the leading half dozen clubs all winning. Arsenal lead with 34 points, two more than Nottingham Forest and three ahead of Liverpool, the reigning champions.

There was no change in Scotland's Premier Division, neither, with Glasgow Celtic still leading Dundee United by seven points, thanks to winning 1-0 at St Mirren. At the bottom, however, Hamilton Academicals, who had been the only team in British League soccer without a single win this season, broke their duck at last, winning 3-1 at Hearts, the third club in the division. It also ended a curious vow by their manager, John Lambie, to remain celibate until his team won . . . Mrs Lambie's views on this state of affairs are not recorded.

Scottish soccer in midweek was dominated by the European club competitions, in which Glasgow Rangers and Dundee United remain Britain's only representatives following the ban on English clubs competing. Both are in UEFA Cup, but Rangers are left with much to do in the second leg of their third round tie with Borussia Moenchengladbach if they are to go further. They were held 1-1 at home last week, conceding a critical away goal to the Germans for all they dominated the game and created many scoring opportunities. Dundee United, on the other hand, won 2-0 at home to Hajduk Split with a workmanlike display that ought to have produced more goals.

Meanwhile Glasgow Celtic have been fined £5,000 in the wake of incidents at the end of last month's Skol Cup final against Glasgow Rangers. Celtic's manager, David Hay, was fined a total of £600 for remarks during and after the match.

☆ ☆ ☆

WELSH RUGBY UNION continue to take a tough line over alleged indiscipline among players. Swansea dropped their young flanker, Paul Moriarty, and severely censured him after a punching incident in which a Richmond player received a cut eye. Swansea, like other clubs who have suffered from alleged punching incidents, have also issued a general warning to players that vicious behaviour will not be tolerated. Moriarty was also omitted from the Welsh national trial teams for next weekend, along with the Bridgend captain, Adrian Owen. This was in spite of Owen's 22-week ban from playing for allegedly kicking a Bristol player being set aside on appeal to the Welsh RU executive committee.

On the field England's premier club team, Bath, had a doleful week. They were first beaten in midweek 12-9 by Gloucester in a rugged Merit Table match, then lost at the weekend 26-9 at Neath. Gloucester were one of the few sides to beat Bath last season, and they won again through their ability in the closing stages to withstand a furious onslaught, having scored a penalty try and a dropped goal within 30 minutes. At Neath the Bath team were too often caught in possession and then confounded by the speed and ferocity of the Neath men, who can now claim to be club champions of Wales and England.

☆ ☆ ☆

ENGLAND'S success in being runners-up to Australia in hockey's World Cup last month has already brought some financial reward. The car dealers, Lada, have agreed to sponsor English hockey's first national league, an indoor competition to be launched next winter. It will be worth £420,000 over three years. They are also to sponsor an invitation outdoor tournament in London at the end of January and the four nations' tournament next October. Meanwhile, England may not play in the World Cup again if a recommendation to the home associations is accepted. Instead Great Britain will be the representative in the World Cup, Olympic Games, and any event above European level. This is the encouraging outcome of a meeting among representatives of men's and women's hockey in England, Wales, and Scotland and would cover senior and junior hockey.

☆ ☆ ☆

HORSE RACING had something of a sensation away from the track last week when Robert Sangster parted company from his private trainer, Michael Dickinson. It was only last May that the pair celebrated the opening of Sangster's £14 million training establishment at Manton, Wiltshire, to which Dickinson had been lured to venture into flat training after enormous success training jump horses. But there have been fundamental differences between the two over how things should be run, especially as only four winners were produced, compared, say, to more than 30 by the former jockey, Lester Piggott, in his first season as a trainer. Taking his place is Barry Hills, who runs a string of horses in the same village that won 55 races and £346,439 last season.

☆ ☆ ☆

SNOOKER'S Steve Davis once more won the UK Open championship at Preston, beating Neal Foulds in the final 16-7. But the televised tournament was overshadowed by an incident at the hall when the mercurial Irish former World champion, Alex "Hurricane" Higgins, allegedly head-butted the tournament director, Paul Hatherall. The game's governing body, the World Professional Billiards and Snooker Association, decided to allow him to continue through the tournament and to have a cooling-off period before putting the allegation and two other complaints to an independent tribunal. Higgins, who has always been a larger-than-life character, self-styled the "People's Champion", has already been fined seven times for various offences in his 17 years as a professional player. He could face a lengthy ban from playing and could be charged by the police. At Preston he went through to a semi-final against Davis, his alter ego. Davis won 9-3, the 18th time he has beaten Higgins in 22 meetings.

☆ ☆ ☆

JAHANGIR KHAN had some revenge last week when he beat the World Open squash champion. New Zealand's Ross Norman, 9-4, 9-10, 9-4, 9-4, in the final of the Swiss Masters. Ross had earlier last month ended Khan's five-year reign as world champion.

☆ ☆ ☆

PAKISTAN and the West Indies shared their three-match Test cricket series last week when they drew the final match at Karachi. Each had won one match. It was a close-run thing, with bad light perhaps coming to the rescue for Pakistan when they were 125 for seven, needing 88 runs to win. Details: Pakistan 239 and 125 for seven; West Indies 240 and 211.

England reap benefits from a wayward attack

CRICKET: Matthew Engel in Perth

WITH three days gone, the Australians were 309 for six in their first innings, in the second Test at Perth, with 84 runs left to score to avoid the follow-on.

Australia were pleasantly surprised by Steve Waugh and England disappointed by Emburey. The game itself is not balanced because Australia spent two days bowling atrociously, and England seized the opportunity like conmen confronted with a batty millionaire.

Broad, Athey, Gower and Richards all played their parts magnificently, but the story of this Test stems from the Australians' astonishingly ill-informed selection policies, which left their attack reliant on an apparent crock in Lawson, a learner in Chris Matthews, two bit-part bowlers Waugh and Greg Matthews, and just one man, Reid, anything like up to the job.

In such an awful situation, their batsmen did quite nobly. The improvement began with the very shrewd decision on Saturday night to send in Waugh, not exactly as a night-watchman, but on the old Broadway principle: "You're going out an understudy, son. You're gonna come back a star."

And he almost did. Waugh lasted all through the morning when Emburey was at his most testing. He survived Marsh, who failed for the first time against England, joining the 360 other Test match bodies in the Botham dungeons, through what people will remember as the customary Botham method of execution: first over of spell, long hop, authentic hit, fielder in the way, out.

The first ball after lunch, Botham was in the way, snapping up Waugh at slip off Emburey's arm ball for 71. When Edmonds had Jones caught at backward short-leg, Australia were 128 for four, and there seemed every chance that the spinners would again run quickly through Australia.

But only two wickets fell in the last 3½ hours. It was still a good pitch, with just the odd crack and dark splodge showing up like something worrying on an X-ray.

Occasionally, the ball would really bite, but the significant element was the confounded wind, rushing across the pitch and posing the technical question whether Edmonds and Emburey should use it to help their drift in the air or their contrary spin.

Gatting tried both methods, but somewhere along the line Emburey lost a little of his rhythm, and with it his control over Australia. Perhaps he was troubled by his injured elbow, though that was officially denied. I suspect it was simply too uncomfortable a day to sustain top-class bowling — and Emburey had to bowl 34 overs. Edmonds had less work and more success.

Border all this while was batting at his impressive best, mixing periods of aggression and calm (just three runs in the first 12 overs of the new ball) and still there with 81 at the close. He is not quite the world's best batsman — Richards is — but he can look by far the most impregnable.

England had assumed control of the game pretty well from the start, with Broad and Athey dominating the Australian bowling. This was England's best opening stand since the Oval 1983 when, strangely enough, Fowler and Tavare also put on 223, against New Zealand. And England have only had three better starts in 259 Tests against Australia — Hobbs and Rhodes, 323 in 1911-12; Hobbs and Sutcliffe 283 in 1924-25; Boycott and Barber 234 in 1965-66.

Broad and Athey does not yet trip off the tongue with quite the same resonance, though they did hold the record for the previous highest opening stand on this tour, 16 in Newcastle. But Broad's innings was most accomplished. He hit 23 fours, most of the drives and clips in the area between square leg and mid-on.

There is not much elegance in Broad's batting: his stance is a modified version of the Nottingham bum-thrust perfected by Basharat Hassan. But he has now made it work much more effectively than when he was first chosen in 1984.

Many of his shots were not hit with any great force, and would have achieved only one or two on an English ground. But the outfield was like a newly-polished ten-pin alley. And one suspects the ball was coming quite quickly on to the bat too. It was hard to judge whether the pitch had any real pace in it, however, because the Australians bowled too badly to give anyone a clear idea.

Athey was less assured. He gave chances or near-chances on 8, 46 and 92 and was involved in an angry exchange with Border after Zoehrer appealed for a catch when he was on 26. (Broad gave Lawson just one hard return chance on 50).

On the second day, England advanced from 272 for 2 overnight to 592 for eight declared — the highest Test score by either side in Perth. Gower marked his return to a confident groove with a chanceless century. Rather more surprising was Richards's 133 — a revelation after his earlier struggles on the tour. Meanwhile Lamb and Botham had both gone for ducks, Gatting for 14 and DeFreitas for 11, but it hardly seemed to matter.

ENGLAND — First Innings

B. C. Broad c Zoehrer b Reid	162
C. W. J. Athey b Reid	96
A. J. Lamb c Zoehrer b Reid	0
M. W. Gatting c Waugh b C. Matthews	14
D. I. Gower c Waugh b G. Matthews	136
I. T. Botham c Border b Reid	0
C. J. Richards c Waugh b C. Matthews	133
P. A. J. DeFreitas lbw b C. Matthews	11
J. E. Emburey not out	5
Extras (b4, lb15, w3, nb13)	35
Total (8 wkts dec)	592

Did not bat: P. H. Edmonds, G. R. Dilley.

Fall of wickets: 1,223, 2-227, 3-275, 4-333, 5-339, 6-548, 7-585, 8-592.

Bowling: Lawson 41-8-126-0; C. Matthews 29.1-4-112-3; Reid 40-8-115-4; Waugh 24-4-90-0; G. Matthews 34-3-124-1; Border 2-0-6-0.

AUSTRALIA — First Innings

G. R. Marsh c Broad b Botham	15
D. C. Boon b Dilley	2
S. R. Waugh c Botham b Emburey	71
D. M. Jones c Athey b Edmonds	27
A. R. Border not out	81
G. M. Ritchie c Botham b Edmonds	33
G. R. J. Matthews c Botham b Dilley	45
T. M. Zoehrer not out	15
Extras (b8, lb3, nb9)	20
Total (6 wkts)	309

To bat: G. F. Lawson, C. D. Matthews, B. A. Reid.

Fall of wickets: 1-4, 2-64, 3-114, 4-128, 5-198, 6-279.

Bowling: Botham 16-3-50-1; Dilley 17-2-50-2; Emburey 35-8-91-1; DeFreitas 16-2-54-0; Edmonds 20-4-53-2.

SOCCER RESULTS

TODAY LEAGUE — FIRST DIVISION: Aston Villa 0, Arsenal 4; Leicester City 2, Chelsea 2; Liverpool 2, Coventry 0; Luton Town 1, Charlton 0; Manchester City 1, Everton 3; Norwich City 2, Oxford United 1; Queen's Park Rangers 2, Sheffield Wednesday 2; Southampton 3, Watford 1; Tottenham 2, Nottingham Forest 3; Wimbledon 1, Manchester United 0. Played Sunday: Newcastle 4, West Ham 0. Leading positions: 1 Arsenal (P 17, Pts 34). 2 Notts Forest 17, 32. 3 Liverpool 17, 31.

SECOND DIVISION: Barnsley 2, West Bromwich Albion 2; Blackburn Rovers 0, Ipswich Town 0; Bradford City 1, Stoke City 4; Crystal Palace 2, Sunderland 0; Grimsby Town 0, Birmingham City 1; Leeds United 2, Derby County 0; Millwall 1, Portsmouth 1; Plymouth Argyl 3, Oldham 2; Sheffield United 0, Brighton 1; Shrewsbury Town 3, Hull 0. Postponed: Reading v Huddersfield. Leading positions: 1 Oldham Athletic 17, 34. 2 Portsmouth 17, 33. 3. Plymouth Argyl 17, 33.

THIRD DIVISION: Blackpool 1, Newport County 1, Bolton 3, York City 1; Chesterfield 1, Bury 1; Fulham 3, Darlington 1; Middlesbrough 1, Chester 2; Notts County 2, Bristol City 0; Swindon Town 2, Carlisle United 0; Walsall 2, Mansfield Town 0; Wigan Athletic 3, Gillingham 1. Postponed: Bristol Rovers v Doncaster, Port Vale v Bournemouth. Played Sunday: Rotherham 2, Bradford 3. Leading positions: 1 Middlesbrough 18, 35. 2 Gillingham 17, 34. 3 Bournemouth 16, 33.

FOURTH DIVISION: Cardiff City 3, Cambridge United 0; Exeter City 4, Aldershot 0; Hereford 2, Scunthorpe United 2; Lincoln City 3, Wolverhampton Wanderers 0; Orient 2, Tranmere 2; Peterborough United 2, Preston North End 1; Rochdale 3, Torquay United 3; Wrexham 0, Swansea City 0. Played Friday: Colchester 3, Halifax 1; Crewe 0, Northampton 5; Hartlepool 1, Stockport 0; Southend 2, Burnley 1. Leading positions: 1 Northampton 17, 44. 2 Swansea City 18, 35. 3 Southend United 17, 33.

FINE FARE SCOTTISH LEAGUE — PREMIER DIVISION: Dundee 3, Clydebank 3; Falkirk 2, Dundee United 1; Hibernian 1, Hamilton Academical 3; Motherwell 0, Aberdeen 1; Rangers 3, Hearts 0; St Mirren 0, Celtic 1. Leading positions: 1 Celtic 21, 36. 2 Dundee United 21, 33. 3 Hearts 21, 28.

FIRST DIVISION: Airdrie 1, Morton 2; Clyde 4, Brechin 1; Dumbarton 1, Queen of South 1; Forfar 1, East Fife 1; Kilmarnock 3, Partick 2; Montrose 0, Dunfermline Athletic 2. Leading positions: 1 Dunfermline 22, 29. 2 Dumbarton 22, 28. 3 Morton 22, 25.

SECOND DIVISION: Alloa 1, Albion 3, Arbroath 2, Ayr 5; Berwick 3, Stranraer 0; Cowdenbeath 1, East Stirling 1; Meadowbank 5, Stenhousemuir 0; Queen's Park 2, Raith 2; St Johnstone 2, Stirling 1. Leading positions: 1 Raith 17, 24. 2 Meadowbank 17, 23. 3 Albion Rovers 17, 22.

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Chirac capitulates to the students

UNDER continuous pressure from university students and high school pupils for two weeks, Prime Minister Jacques Chirac decided on Monday, December 8, to withdraw the whole of the Devaquet draft bill on education. The move was also in response to demands from a section of his own ruling Majority and from President Francois Mitterrand, who judged the bill "ill-timed" and "pointless". Acceptance of the resignation of Alain Devaquet, the junior minister reponsible for Research and Higher Education, was announced later the same day. The Paris Bourse, after an initial drop, later rallied.

The student coordinating committee had called on the population to observe Monday as a day of mourning (for student victims of police violence). A day of protest demonstrations is set for Wednesday.

A silent student march in the Latin Quarter on Saturday afternoon had turned later that evening into numerous clashes between the police and fringe groups. One student was killed. Despite an early police claim that the death of Malik Ossoukine, 22, was the result of a heart attack brought

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on by his physical condition (he was undergoing regular haemodialysis for a renal complaint, but was otherwise fit) and had nothing to do with any police action, an autopsy was later reported to have confirmed that death was due to blows from policemen.

Two weeks of student unrest, sparked off by government plans to push through education reforms that were perceived as elitist and selective, had built up on Thursday, December 4, into one of the biggest demonstrations seen in Paris (or, for that matter, anywhere else in France) since the heyday of student dissent in 1968.

It was to have been a vast and joyous gathering and it appeared to have achieved at least one of its principal aims when Education Minister René Monory went on television on Friday evening to announce he had been asked to take over responsibility for the university reform bill (thereby shunting aside Alain Devaquet, the junior minister in charge of Research and Higher Education who had been handling the matter until then), and that he had decided to postpone consideration of the three disputed clauses, which concern university entrance, the imposition of study courses and national diplomas.

Doubtless the government was still counting on student enthusiasm flagging, what with the wintry weather and the approaching Christmas holidays, or on driving wedges between students, faculty members and parents.

Students were still mulling over this and wondering what their next move would be when it was learnt that a 22-year-old law student of Algerian origin (but of French nationality), Malik Oussekine, from Dauphine (Paris IX) had been killed in the Latin Quarter. At least two witnesses alleged he had been set upon by the police. The next morning, Devaquet, a baker's son and one of the rare academics in the Chirac government — he is professor of physics at Jussieu (Paris VII) — offered to hand in his resignation.

From then on the mood changed considerably, with a radicalisation on the side of the students and the government (through the voice of Interior Minister Charles Pasqua) accusing "leftists, anarchists and professional destabilisers" of manipulating the students.

A new element entered the student demonstrations when camouflaged and armed provocateurs mingling with demonstrating students in the Latin Quarter went on the rampage, setting fire to cars, smashing shop windows and looting.

All this also came at a very awkward moment for Jacques Chirac's Rassemblement Pour la République (RPR) at the weekend was celebrating the tenth anniversary of its formation. The glittering ball that was to have rounded off two days of festivities and an extraordinary congress of the RPR at the Exhibition Hall in La Défense was called off.



Cars blaze in the Latin Quarter as CRS riot police go into action.

Campbell Page of the Guardian writes from Paris: Mr Chirac called a Cabinet meeting before making a lunchtime statement on television. The Prime Minister said: "No change in the universities, however necessary it may be, can be introduced successfully without considerable support from the interested parties, particularly the students and the teachers. It can be carried out only in an atmosphere of calm."

He acknowledged that these conditions could not be met. "The demonstrations under way, with all the risks and dangers of violence which they carry for everyone, are the proof of this."

The Education Minister Mr Rene Monory would try to achieve widespread agreement on new measures for university reform.

President Francois Mitterrand played a decisive part in the Prime Minister's decision. With his presidential concern for national unity, he urged Mr Chirac to withdraw the controversial bill.

The system of coexistence between a Socialist President and a rightwing Prime Minister would have been severely tested if President Mitterrand had been forced to intervene publicly.

President Mitterrand took the unusual step on Monday of visiting the family of the 22-year-old student, Malik Oussekine, a French citizen of North African descent, who died after being beaten by the police.

Mr Chirac will pay a considerable price for his handling of the controversy about university reform. His standing as a head of government, and his prospects as a potential head of state in the presidential elections due in early 1988, will both suffer.

There were stoppages in many offices and schools on Monday during a day of mourning for the dead student. About 30,000 students wearing black armbands marched through Paris.

Fighting at the junction of the Boulevard St Germain and the Boulevard St Michel, close to the Sorbonne, ended early on Sunday after riot police finally cleared demonstrators who had built barricades, burned 20 cars, smashed shop and cafe windows and indulged in looting.

Critics have seized on the government's clumsiness in making no concessions on the eve of Thursday's student demonstration, when violence ensued, but in making them the next evening. The impact of Friday's concessions was soon obliterated by the student's death early on Saturday morning.

Police tactics have also been denounced. The illegal horizontal firing of tear-gas canisters is alleged to have caused serious injury to two students on Thursday. One lost an eye and another had a fractured skull.

There has been further criticism of the use of a police motor cycle squad which specialises in breaking up demonstrations. There are two men on each machine and the pillion passenger carries a long club.

The police are also under attack for failing to isolate and arrest troublemakers who, as everyone agrees, are damaging the interests of a fundamentally peaceful students' movement.

Thunderstorms in the sky over France

COMMENT

THE protest campaign by French university students and senior-school children blew up over the weekend into one of those storms out of a clear sky which are a special feature of the Gallic political climate. Superficially, it is highly reminiscent of 1968: even though the historic cobbles of the Latin Quarter in Paris were sealed in asphalt after that unforgettable and turbulent summer. There they were again on the "Boule Miche" hurling stones to camera. So were the myrmidons of the CRS riot police, blasting away with tear-gas and thunderflashes. The early flight back to Paris of the Prime Minister, Mr Jacques Chirac, from the studiously uncontroversial Eurosummit in London looked like a replay of President Charles de Gaulle's ignominious return from Romania in 1968, even if President François Mitterrand stayed put and contented himself with an appeal for calm. But, despite the dramatic television footage, there is no reason to believe that the analogy will go so far as to drive either leader to dash up to French army HQ in Germany to ensure loyal troops are available, as de Gaulle did 18 years ago.

But that reasonable assumption provides no justification for dismissing the return of widespread disorder to the streets of Paris and elsewhere as just a flare-up. The events of the past few days are redolent of the same kind of insensitivity and mismanagement which provoked the original demonstrations at the end of last month. The initial spark was a government plan to introduce selection and other restrictions for university entry. Their abandonment was one of the victories won in 1968, when that generation of students was very prominent in the great wave of unrest. On this occasion the protesters are not trying to overturn the established order but are fighting to retain it. In short, '86 is '68 spelt backwards.

When the Government responded last week to an almost entirely sober and non-violent campaign by announcing that it was taking its draft bill off the table and putting it back on the drawing-board, it appeared that Mr Chirac had wisely decided not to make a crisis out of a drama. It looked like an intelligent concession to a sector of public opinion whose strength of feeling had been badly underestimated. But, apparently spurred on by this quick and clean victory, some student leaders decided to go for broke: they would not settle for a rethink but only for a cancellation. This was asking a lot of any government, and far too much of one so aggressively dedicated to law and order. The demos went on, more police were mobilised, and on Friday the predictable happened: a protester died under the batons. The tragic victim was also the perfect martyr, young, a student, an "immigrant" of Algerian descent and reportedly a sick man — just the kind of person many French youngsters believe their elders and their government loathe on principle.

Anyone who looked closely at the TV film will have noticed that the most violent demonstrators were remarkably long in the tooth, old enough in some cases to have been full-grown in 1968. As student leaders have claimed, this was clearly a vicious display of unsolicited "solidarity" by a rent-a-mob element of the kind which is latent in Britain. The students' disavowal is made credible by the remarkable discipline, organisation, and lack of political bile in the demonstrations preceding the lethal over-reaction by the CRS. If the cycle of violence is to be stopped and now that the Prime Minister has backed down and withdrawn the bill, the student movement should think again about further mass-protest, which is bound to attract extraneous thugs in even greater numbers, to say nothing of all the other organisations — including the CGT and main parents' association — which joined the protest on Sunday. That is something the students cannot ignore, no matter how unwanted this "support" may be. And, waiting in the wings, are the CRS riot squads, the most heavy-handed police formations in the democratic world. They should be firmly reined in too.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Aflatoxins and the spread of Aids

There appears to be legitimate concern that a widely used pesticide may adversely affect persons infected with the Aids virus if they consume food contaminated by it even in very small amounts.

We believe there is cause for even greater concern about another food contaminant which is much more prevalent and which may have relevance to Aids, especially in Africa where the disease is now thought to have originated. We refer to aflatoxins which constantly contaminate many staple foods in the tropics.

Aflatoxins were discovered about 25 years ago when veterinarians, investigating the sudden death of some 100,000 turkey poults on farms in England, discovered a toxic factor in feed imported from Brazil which had become contaminated by a fungus, Aspergillus flavus. This fungus occurs worldwide, but produces toxins only when it grows under conditions of high temperature and humidity.

It has been firmly established that among the many adverse biological effects of aflatoxins, carcinogenicity, mutagenicity and immuno-suppression rank high.

People in Europe and North America are protected from exposure to aflatoxins by legally enforceable food-screening procedures introduced when the toxicity of aflatoxins was recognised. Sadly this safeguard has not been extended to most countries in the tropics where alfatoxin-contaminated foods are widely consumed.

Research undertaken by our group over the past six years has revealed alarming aflatoxin exposure in tropical Africa. Raw foods in markets and homes and cooked food "on the plate" obtained in Sudan, Ghana, Kenya and other countries show frequent and often severe aflatoxin-contamination; but of more significance is the fact that more than 30 per cent of over 1,000 children studied show aflatoxins in their blood, and a similar proportion of hundreds of breast-milk samples analysed contain aflatoxins.

Aids is widespread in tropical Africa where the pattern of infection and spread of the disease differs from that observed in Europe and America. Children in Africa acquire the disease for reasons and by means that remain obscure.

We conceive of the possibility that the immunosuppressive affects of aflatoxins may be a crucial factor in the susceptibility of people in Africa to the Aids virus. It selectively invades T lymphocytes, which also happen to be the cells whose immunological functions are most adversely affected by alfatoxins.

There is almost a total lack of concern in the Western world about the fact that millions of people in the tropics consume foods that we are prohibited from feeding to farm animals because of their aflatoxin content. This probably reflects public indifference to problems that affect "them" and not "us".

It would be poetic justice with a vengeance if the Aids epidemic which now confronts "us" were to prove to be related to aflatoxins in Africa: a problem we ignored because it affected only "them".

R. G. Hendrickse,
(Professor of Tropical Paediatrics),
S. M. Lamplugh,
(Research Biochemist),
School of Tropical Medicine,
Liverpool.

Truth and economy

The now celebrated epigram of Sir Robert Armstrong — about being "economical with the truth" — is by no means original. Three hundred years ago at the then Brooke House committee's examination of the Navy Board, Samuel Pepys "charged the commissioners with the same economy of truth concerning £514,000 voted by Parliament" (Pepys Library 2874 ff 388-90).

(Dr) E. P. Duggan,
Newcastle-under-Lyme.

I know I shouldn't tell you this, but I managed to get hold of a copy of One Girl's War by Joan Miller; you know, the one the Attorney-General is trying to ban from publication. It's dynamite!

Did you know, for example, that "inferior birdseed, which was all you could get, caused the deaths of innumerable caged birds during the war years" (page 71); or that "if you had any sense, you sat bolt upright in railway carriages at the time, to avoid getting nits in your hair" (page 143)?

No wonder the Government wants to keep the book under wraps; or is this information already in the public domain, as the publishers claim?

Tony Bavington,
Sudbury, Suffolk.

Goldfarb's 'selective revelation of prejudices'

Yes, America is a strange and foreign country, but *Michael* Goldfarb's explanation ("Why America is so Foreign", Nov. 23) is nothing more than a subjective revelation of his own prejudices — against the western US, against "people under 40".

I congratulate Mr. Goldfarb on his one year of expatriate living; I myself have recently returned to America after four years in the British Isles. Goldfarb's claims that America's "strangeness" stems from its educational system; I have attended one American university and two British ones and cannot recognise either country in the situation he describes.

For a start, *my generation* (now in our mid-20's) came through the American school system at a time of educational experimentation. We were not taught "facts" at the expense of ideas. Absolutely the opposite. The noble goal in those days was to teach us to think. The subsequent backlash of "Back to Basics" learning has not yet had time to produce functional *illiterates of voting age.*

British education at its best — through A-levels — is demonstrably more thorough than the typical American high school education. But how many people achieve three A-levels? Moreover, American students begin their real education at undergraduate level, at a time when most British students are suffering from A-level burnout. Most British students treat their time at university as a three-year drinking party. I do not mean to belittle British universities, but the average graduate is pretty compatible to his American counterpart.

In the end, then, both educational systems produce the same mixed result: an ignorant majority beside a (carefully selected) intellectual elite. So how does this explain America to Europe? Does it not rather explain the mutual bafflement of the democratic majority and their would-be rulers in any country?

I too, like Mr. Goldfarb, hope *that the Democrats* have the "intelligence" — although I would call it the *courage* — to nominate Mario Cuomo in the next presidential election. Meanwhile, I wonder why the British have twice elected (and still favour in the opinion polls) a Government which has totally demoralised their own health and education institutions — a Government which wastes human potential at both ends of the educational scale (3.2 million unemployed and the best of an entire generation of scientists and academics forced into underemployment or emigration) — a Government, in short, as *divisive* and vindictive as Mrs. Thatcher's. In this case Europe baffles at least one American.

Elizabeth Rhodes,
Pullman, Washington.

Flying the flag

It is refreshing to read strong criticism of America by an American (Why America Is So Foreign, Nov. 23).

Everything Michael Goldfarb says is true, but there are many other things which make America so foreign.

The most important is its citizens' belief that America is the greatest country in the world. More than that, that the "American Way" is the right way, and anyone opposed to that view is an enemy. In American schools kindergarteners place their hands on their hearts and say the Pledge of Allegiance, followed by singing "We're Proud To Be An American". The flag flies in all shopping malls, and in churches the flag is to be found on the altar, thus giving the impression that worshipping God and worshipping the flag are one and the same thing.

Americans are so seriously misinformed about what goes on in the world, and along with their warped belief that the "American Way" is right, they are willing to kill to preserve that "Way". They will not listen to what the world is telling them.

Jancis Cammarota,
S. Iola St.,
Aurora, Colorado.

Helpful — or baffling?

Who, pray, is Michael Goldfarb? He seems to have all the answers, as an expatriate, to the questions raised by the *Guardian* about how the US baffles Europeans. I thought the questions were thought-probing and meriting of serious reflection.

Goldfarb seems to have all the answers with glib ease. The points he makes are such over-simplifications and so generalised as to tell very little of what calls for thoughtful analysis. The changes in America the *Guardian* perceives are real. They are baffling to me. I don't find Goldfarb helpful.

Alfred Putnam,
Professor of Mathematics,
Univ. of Chicago.

As a 27-year resident of the United States, please let me assure your readers that Michael Goldfarb is a man who knows what he is talking about!

(Dr) **Eric T. Pengelley,**
Bella Casa,
Davis, CA.

THE GUARDIAN WEEKLY

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US help to Pol Pot

In 1979 and 1980 we made two television documentaries in which we showed the extent of Pol Pot's crimes in Cambodia and the complicity of Western *governments* and aid agencies in sustaining the Khmer Rouge.

The current disclosures about American government support for terrorism in Nicaragua and elsewhere are part of the same, unchanging foreign policy whose principal aim is to arm and maintain those whom President Reagan has called "freedom fighters" and who are, in the literal sense, terrorists. The political complexion of these terrorists does not *matter*, as long as their ends satisfy United States global interests.

Until now it has been difficult to provide hard evidence that Washington has been the main financial prop, apart from China, for arguably the most extreme communist movement in modern times — the Khmer Rouge, who were responsible for the deaths of up to two million of their own people.

When we filmed at a Khmer Rouge base in 1980 and found Pol Pot's men being "fattened on Western aid" (as Ian Guest wrote in the Guardian), we could not confirm the source of Khmer Rouge direct funding. And the US government issued persistent denials that it was the source.

Now we can disclose that the US government has, since 1980, funded the Khmer Rouge with a massive $85 million. This unpublicised figure will help to explain why the United States appeared to give, publicly, just $5 million to the coalition of which the Khmer Rouge is the controlling force.

This figure of $85 million, details of which have been supplied by the US Congressional Research Service, reveals that during 1980 the US gave Pol Pot $54,550,000.

This figure is listed as "government to government" aid — that is, US Government aid given directly to the Khmer Rouge regime which, although controlling *no part* of Cambodia, still retains the Cambodian seat in the United Nations.

Perhaps President Reagan's special committee set up to "get at the whole truth" of the Iranian/Nicaraguan Contra arms deal should focus on the funding and sustenance of Pol Pot and on what has been happening in Cambodia these past seven years: years of silence, suffering and betrayal for the Cambodian people.

While the present government in Phnom Penh struggles to reclaim the country from years of devastation in spite of a Washington-led development aid embargo, *the $85 million* hitherto unaccounted for is blood money on a scale unimaginable to *those* who have not seen the results of such "aid".

We have seen the results and we are confident that $85 million allows the greatest mass murderers since Hitler to try again.

John Pilger,
David Munro,
London SW4.

Backing the wrong horse in Iran

President Reagan's decision to recognise the regime in Tehran as a "reality", may reveal an interesting characteristic of recent American policy towards Iran; court the loser and announce it to the world! During the last months of the Shah's government, ex-President Carter did not hesitate to publicise his support for a regime which, with hindsight, a near total majority of Iranians believe had fallen into disgrace.

At the same time, Americans were precipitating the Shah's downfall through secret dealings with Khomeini.

Consequently while the new regime remained popular, Carter was seen as *the* enemy, and when Khomeini proved to be an inefficient, reactionary and extremely oppressive tyrant, those secret dealings were taken as proof of American opposition to the Shah's modernisation efforts.

Now that the Islamic Republic is already a dead institution as far as Iranians are concerned, comes another American episode *of supporting* oppression. If the White House advisers based their decisions on "realistic" assumptions and studied the history and mentality of Iranians, they realise that the Islamic Regime cannot survive.

Name and address withheld,
Tehran.

MI5 saga provides political ammunition

THE MI5 secrets case being played out in the Australian courts has done more than provide gripping entertainment for viewers and readers back home. It has turned the routine political slanging between the Labour leader and the Prime Minister into a kind of personal antagonism that bodes ill for the conduct of the general election, whenever it comes.

While Mr Kinnock was away in the United States, trying to convince Americans of the virtues of Labour's non-nuclear defence policy, Mrs Thatcher accused him of abandoning not only the fundamental defence policy of his predecessors but also the bipartisan policy of the Commons on national security. She came as close as she dared to suggesting that he was unfit for high office and not to be *trusted* with defence secrets.

Mr Kinnock's offence was to telephone Mr Malcolm Turnbull, the Australian lawyer, who is out to defeat the British Government's attempt to ban publication of the book by a former MI5 agent, Mr Peter Wright. This kind of behaviour was "incredible", declared Mrs Thatcher, who went on to agree with one of her backbenchers who suggested that she should have "no truck" in discussing national security issues with one who had behaved as Kinnock had done.

This and other attacks on Mr Kinnock were clearly an attempt to distract attention from the humiliations poured upon the British security services in the Sydney hearing which, if nothing else, demonstrated that MI5 and MI6 are laws unto themselves. The case inspired a motion from the Liberal-SDP Alliance calling for better parliamentary scrutiny of the security and intelligence services. But the Home Secretary, Mr Douglas Hurd, refused on the grounds that there was no longer a political consensus on defence and security.

Mr Kinnock had led his party away from that consensus, said Mr Hurd, *following* his Prime Minister's line. "There is an amazing mixture of inexperience and irresponsibility in the leader of the Opposition's conduct on this matter," he said. It was inconceivable that previous Opposition leaders would have contacted the defence counsel in the Wright case.

A spin-off from the Sydney case has been a suggestion that Lord Rothschild, a millionaire Establishment luminary, former head of the Government "Think Tank" and a wartime MI5 employee, had been the fifth man in a Soviet spy ring in league with Burgess, Maclean, Philby and Blunt. In an anguished open letter in the Daily Telegraph, Lord Rothschild demanded that MI5 should declare publicly that he was not, and never had been, a Soviet agent.

Since MI5 does not, officially, exist, the demands to clear Lord Rothschild were put in the Commons to Mrs Thatcher who, after first trying to dodge the issue, finally and grudgingly conceded that "we have no evidence" that he was ever a KGB agent. It was a poor reply to a distinguished public servant and the Liberal leader, Mr David Steel, said it underlined the demand for a parliamentary committee to monitor the security services and to which serving and former members of the services should have access.

The Government will net a cool £8 billion from last week's sale of British Gas — the world's biggest flotation — which attracted 4.5 *million applicants* and was oversubscribed by about four times. The windfall will help the Chancellor, Mr Nigel Lawson, with his pre-election Budget difficulties, and the buyers were not displeased to see their shares, bought for a part payment of 50p, rise to 67p as trading began, though they later fell back to 62p.

The flotation was not, however, quite the success the Government had hoped for because it failed to attract the six or seven million buyers confidently expected by the Energy Secretary, Mr Peter Walker. It could well be that most of the small investors have already shelled out all their spare cash on the more attractive offers such as British Telecom and the Trustee Savings Bank. So who will be queuing up for the Government's forthcoming sales — of British Airways, and the electricity and water industries?

A political storm is inevitable if, as expected, the Ministry of Defence decides to buy American Boeing E3 Awacs airborne early warning aircraft for the RAF in preference to the Nimrod which is made by British Aerospace and GEC. The ageing Shackletons that currently provide Britain's only airborne early warning are to be retired next year, as the first Awacs come into service, and technical experts at the MoD are known to favour the Boeing as a replacement.

The Nimrod project, on which £900 million has already been spent, is three years late because of difficulties with its electronic equipment. But its makers claim that the problems have now been ironed out and that failure to sell it to the RAF would put 2,500 jobs at risk. Boeing, however, offers to compensate by spending £130 on British electronic equipment for every £100 the Government spends on buying Awacs.

The Environment Secretary, Mr Nicholas Ridley, made a contribution towards improving his party's election prospects by manipulating his allocation of next year's rate support grants in such a way as to favour the Tory — and wealthy — Southern counties at the expense of the more deserving urban areas of the North.

Rebellious Tory backbenchers had told Mr Ridley in no uncertain terms that his original proposals would cause such huge rate increases in the Home Counties that large numbers of seats would be handed on a plate to the SDP-Liberal Alliance. The Minister bowed to the rebellion. But, since he has no intention of increasing the total grant aid, his concessions to the South will be matched by harsher treatment for the North.

THE WEEK IN BRITAIN by James Lewis

FOREIGN EXCHANGES

	Sterling Rates December 9	Previous Closing Rates
Australia	2.1753-2.1780	2.1810-2.1840
Austria	19.99-20.03	20.04-20.07
Belgium	59.25-59.36	59.11-59.22
Canada	1.9505-1.9533	1.9690-1.9719
Denmark	10.76-10.77	10.74-10.75
France	9.34-9.35	9.32-9.34
Germany	2.84-2.85	2.84-2.85
Hong Kong	11.07-11.06	11.11-11.12
Ireland	1.0477-1.0487	1.0477-1.0487
Italy	1,976-1,982	1,973-1,979
Japan	230.12-230.50	231.41-231.78
Netherlands	3.220-3.225	3.22-3.23
Norway	10.70-10.72	10.78-10.81
Portugal	210.98-212.20	211.42-212.64
Spain	192.79-193.20	192.85-193.13
Sweden	9.84-9.86	9.86-9.87
Switzerland	2.385-2.389	2.37-2.38
USA	1.4160-1.4170	1.4285-1.4295
ECU	1.3719-1.3736	1.3686-1.3703

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MPs 'misled by Thatcher'

THE Prime Minister's statements to the Commons about Anthony Blunt and Sir Roger Hollis, a former head of the security service, were "gravely misleading" and "substantially false," the former MI5 officer, Mr Peter Wright, said on Monday.

In an affidavit which he read to the New South Wales Supreme Court, where the Government is trying to suppress his memoirs, he said that the British Establishment had never accepted that it was "en masse penetrated by the Russians".

With so many spies, he said, there was no hope of MI5 catching them all. The answer to Soviet penetration was greater public awareness of the problem "That," he said, "is the object of my book."

In a slow, at times faltering voice he told the packed court that his memoirs would compromise no operations, prejudice no source and expose no secret.

The consequences of Hollis having been a spy, he claimed, were enormous. "Not only does it mean that MI5 is probably still staffed by people with similar views to him, but it means that ASIO (the Australian security service) was established on terms and with the advice of a Russian spy.

But, he added, he was "absolutely certain" that neither Lord Rothschild nor his second wife, Tess, at any time spied for Russia.

Mr Wright, seated in the witness box, took over an hour to read those parts — about half of his 32-page affidavit — to which the Government did not object to being heard in open court. He ended by insisting that his motive for writing his memoirs was not primarily financial. It was, he said, to secure changes in MI5.

"The present state of Britain is in part due to the penetration of the Establishment by the Russians, and the subsequent cover-up. Unless the scale of the penetration was understood, nothing could be done to stop it."

For years, Mr Wright said, the secret services had assumed that their work was best done with minimum reporting and accountability to the government and ultimately to the people. That, too, he now believed was wrong.

Mr Wright, who is now 70 and in poor health, left MI5 in 1976 after spending 20 years in counter espionage, the only senior officer, he said, to have done so.

It was "gravely misleading" to say as Mrs Thatcher *did in the* Commons in November, 1979, that Blunt cooperated with the authorities after confessing to have been a Russian agent. It was this that prompted him to write a dossier about the investigations.

And he said it was "simply not correct" to say, as Mrs Thatcher did in March 1981, after the allegations against Hollis, that the extent of Soviet penetration into MI5 had been thoroughly investigated. Large passages of the affidavit relating to Mrs Thatcher's statements were not read out in open court.

• The Attorney-General, Sir Michael Havers, disclosed on Monday in the Commons that he was considering a prosecution under the Official Secrets Act of Mr Chapman Pincher, the journalist and author, for inducing Mr Peter Wright to break confidentiality.

By Richard Norton-Taylor in Sydney

Channon's friends gaoled

By Paul Keel

TWO friends of Olivia Channon, the Cabinet minister's daughter who died from a heroin overdose, and her supplier are beginning prison sentences after pleading guilty at Oxford Crown Court last week to drug offences.

Sebastian Guinness, aged 23, the brewing heir, was gaoled for four months for possessing heroin and cocaine; Rosie Johnston, also 23, who collected the heroin which killed her best friend, was sentenced to nine months for possession and being concerned in supplying; and Paul Dunstan, 31, received four years for supplying after being described by the judge as "an out-and-out pusher".

The three were charged after Miss Channon, the 22-year-old daughter of Mr Paul Channon, the Trade and Industry Secretary, had been found dead in a study at Christ Church College, Oxford, on June 11 after an end-of-finals party. She had died from the heroin overdose and alcohol.

Passing sentence, Mr Justice Otton said the courts were determined to play their part in stamping out the evil traffic in "agents of human misery" such as heroin and cocaine.

"There is, perhaps, a notion in our society that it is acceptable for the rich and privileged to dabble in hard drugs. It is not, and those sentences are intended to show that it is not."

Mr Justice Otton absolved the three from any responsibility for the Cabinet Minister's daughter: "I do not regard any of you as being responsible, directly or indirectly, in the death of Olivia Channon.

Rebuff for Kinnock on Nato

By David Fairhall

NATO'S defence ministers collectively rejected unilateral disarmament last week in what was widely taken to be a deliberate rebuff of the non-nuclear policy of the Labour leader, Mr Neil Kinnock.

Labour's proposals were not directly discussed during the Nato meeting in Brussels, and the British Defence Secretary, Mr George Younger, afterwards denied any responsibility for inserting this unprecedented reference in the joint communique.

The words had already been drafted when he arrived, Mr Younger said, but they were "totally sensible" and if they applied to Mr Kinnock's views the Labour leader should take note.

Labour's defence policy supports Nato, and the provision of strong conventional deterrent forces, but its proposal to remove all nuclear weapons from Britain continues to attract sharp criticism from the allied military establishment.

At a press conference after the regular meeting of the Nato defence planning committee, the US Defence Secretary, Mr Caspar Weinberger, said that the Supreme Allied Commander, Europe, General Bernard Rogers, had quite properly commented on the dangers of Mr Kinnock's proposals — they they might prompt the withdrawal of US troops from Europe.

Mr Weinberger then added his own scathing comments about those who preferred a policy of "defenceless defence" or declined to maintain nuclear deterrence for fear of being provocative.

The central political purpose of the Brussels meeting was to establish a common approach to forthcoming East-West arms control negotiations in Geneva following the drastic, and to some extent divisive, initiatives that emerged from the recent Reykjavik summit.

Ministers agreed to concentrate on achieving a 50 per cent reduction in strategic nuclear forces and the elimination of intermediate nuclear forces from Europe — the Soviet SS-20s and American Cruise and Pershing II missiles.

The communique did not refer to President Reagan's proposal to eliminate all ballistic nuclear missiles in 10 years. However, there was a reference to the need for parallel "constraints" on shorter range missiles on a basis of equality; for the early conclusion of a verifiable ban on chemical weapons; and for a new effort to reduce conventional forces on both sides.

Paul Ellman adds from Madrid: Sharp differences have emerged between Spain and the US over negotiations to reduce the American military presence here. The Prime Minister, Mr Felipe Gonzalez, rebuked the US Defence Secretary, Mr Caspar Weinberger at the weekend, for claiming that US forces in Spain were playing a Nato role.

The issue is potentially embarrassing for Mr Gonzalez since he won approval of Spanish membership of Nato in a referendum last March by promising that he would reduce the American military presence.

Mr Weinberger irritated Spanish officials by telling a meeting of Nato defence ministers in Brussels last week that the US forces in Spain were making a vital contribution to the overall defence of Europe by the Alliance.

Spain has insisted all along that the negotiations on the American presence, which are to continue in Washington on February 3, were a strictly bilateral affair, stemming from an agreement signed in 1953, 29 years before Spain joined Nato. Subsequent accords fixed the maximum permitted US presence at 12,500 men.

"It's not possible that Weinberger believes that the American troops are Atlantic Alliance forces," Mr Gonzalez said. "It would seem as if he does not know about the bilateral agreement. It must be an error of interpretation or at least a lack of knowledge on his part."

The most recent round of talks on the issue, held in Madrid last week, produced deadlock over a Spanish proposal that the US withdraw the 401st Tactical Air Wing, which operates 79 F-16 fighters from the base at Torrejon on the outskirts of the Spanish capital. Spain argued that its duties could be undertaken by its own air force, which is currently being re-equipped with US-made F-18 A fighter bombers.

The US position, however, is that the unit's operational area stretches as far as Turkey and Spain would not be able to fill the gap left by its departure because it is only a political member of Nato and has not integrated its armed forces into the Alliance's command structure.

Continuing cold

By Hella Pick in Geneva

THE prospect of any major agreement between the US and the Soviet Union over nuclear arms during the Reagan presidency is receding. American officials are gloomy after last week's discussions between the leaders of the US and Soviet arms control negotiators in Geneva.

This perspective also diminishes the importance of the tortuous accord reached by Nato's defence ministers in Brussels last week on Alliance priorities for the US-Soviet negotiations.

Those close to the negotiations claim that even under the best circumstances and with a degree of political will which is not visible now, it would need at least 12 months to complete draft treaties on, for example, an INF agreement, incorporating the elimination of medium-range nuclear missiles in Europe. The two sides are relatively close on such a treaty.

But a great deal of work is required, even if the Soviet Union did not insist on linking such an INF agreement to a wider package.

The chief Soviet negotiator in Geneva, Viktor Karpov, said after last week's talks that the Soviet Union remained ready to negotiate an earlier version of an INF agreement without linking it to space weapons. But that version, he said, would require Britain and France to freeze their independent nuclear arsenals, and would allow the Soviet Union to retain its present deployments of SS20s in its Asian territories. The Russians know that the West will not accept these conditions.

On strategic nuclear weapons reductions, the two superpowers have already reached a broad agreement on a first stage 50 per cent cut. Yet, even if the Soviet Union suddenly took a U-turn so much remains to be ironed out on verification, on sub limits, that months of tough negotiations seem inevitable.

Lords uphold ruling on addict's baby

By Malcolm Dean

FIVE Law Lords have unanimously upheld the right of magistrates to take babies away from addicts who continue to take heavy doses of drugs during pregnancy.

The baby in the case, known only as Victoria, was born suffering from withdrawal symptoms and had to be kept in intensive care for several weeks. Her mother was a heroin addict.

However, Mrs Anne Barker, the social services director for Berkshire, where the child was taken into care, countered fears about the ruling. "Observers who are suggesting that this makes all parents who abuse drugs or who smoke or drink to be likely to lose their children, do those parents a disservice," she said.

Lord Goff drew a distinction between a mother who harmed her unborn baby through too much alcohol or drugs but was able to break the habit just before the birth and a mother still addicted at the birth.

In the first category, magistrates would not be right to take a child into care, because although damage was committed there would be no further harm. The purpose of care proceedings was to prevent future damage.

It was important to avoid an interpretation of the act which could result in any child born suffering from some avoidable ante-natal affliction (like too much alcohol or smoking) being taken into care, he said.

The Law Lords ruled that the law did allow courts to take into account what happened during pregnancy. They rejected the High Court ruling that the 1969 Children and Young Persons Act only applied to children and not foetuses.

The appeal, which was brought by the child's court-appointed guardian, supported by her mother, conceded that the initial care order was necessary but argued that the child should have been made a ward of court.

The mother, who cannot be named to protect the identity of the child, said that she had been allowed two hours a week access to her child until a few weeks ago. She had transferred from heroin to methadone, but had managed to reduce the dose, although she would never be able to kick the habit. She felt herself perfectly capable of bringing up the child.

The baby was born on March 12, 1985, in the Royal Berkshire Hospital, Reading. The mother had been a drug addict for ten years and a registered addict for three. The Law Lords noted she knew the dangers to which she was exposing her baby by continuing to take drugs.

The baby was removed from her mother's care at birth and is at present with foster parents, but is expected to be found adoptive parents next year.

The parents said that they would try to take the case to the European Commission of Human Rights in the hope of a hearing before the European Court.

The British Medical Association said: "The medical profession's opinion is that a heroin addict mother may be sufficiently responsible to look after her own child adequately and it is only in cases where the health of the baby may be at risk if it is cared for by its mother that a court ruling may be sought." Each case should be considered separately, on its merits.

City man accused of dealing offences

By Peter Rodgers and Alan Travis

A SUMMONS alleging share dealing offences has been served on Mr Geoffrey Collier, who resigned last month from the merchant bank, Morgan Grenfell.

The summons, which launches criminal proceedings, was announced by the Corporate and Consumer Affairs Minister, Mr Michael Howard. His department refused to give any details beyond the bare announcement, which said that the allegations concerned transactions in the shares of AE.

This is an engineering company involved in a bid from Mr Robert Maxwell's Hollis Group which was advised by Morgan Grenfell.

The prosecution follows an investigation by two government-appointed inspectors, Mr Peter Scott QC, chairman-elect of the Bar Association, and Mr Graham Kennedy, a senior executive of stockbrokers James Capel and chairman of the Stock Exchange committee which investigates suspicious share price movements. They were asked to investigate whether there had been contraventions of insider dealing legislation.

Mr Collier, aged 35, was joint managing director of securities at Morgan Grenfell until his resignation.

In the Commons, under the protection of parliamentary privilege, Labour's front bench spokesman on City affairs, Mr Robin Cook, said that Mr Collier had been hired at a salary of £300,000 a year yet that did not prevent him from "having a bit on the side" and engaging in share speculation in an engineering company.

"I have no doubt that most of those who trade in the City are honest dealers, but I find it difficult to believe that Mr Collier is an exception," said Mr Cook. "He is only exceptional in that he has been brought to book."

Airbus hit as BCal orders US airliners

By Michael Smith

BRITISH Caledonian Airways has placed a £700 million order for nine US jets in a deal that puts considerable pressure on Britain and its partners in the European plane-making consortium, Airbus Industrie, to review plans for developing the next generation of Airbus jets.

BCal's order is likely to trigger the launch of the three-engined McDonnell Douglas MD-11 jets in competitions with Airbus, which plans to launch two new jets in the early 1990s.

Airbus partners, including British Aerospace with a 20 per cent shareholding, are seeking around £2 billion from the governments in Britain, France, Germany and Spain to develop the twin-engined A330 and four-engined A340. The consortium supports 155,000 jobs in Europe, including 30,000 in Britain.

BCal has rejected the 280-seat A340 in favour of the MD-11 and there are serious doubts that the market in new aircraft could support both the A340 and MD-11. Airbus Industrie and McDonnell Douglas failed earlier this year to reach agreement on joint development of the MD-11 in return for Airbus dropping production of the A340.

There is considerable pressure in Britain and Europe for the Airbus project to be adequately funded to support employment and to protect the European aerospace industry against domination from America.

McDonnell Douglas is trying to sell the MD-11, an advanced derivative of the DC-10, to European airlines like Swissair, Finnair, and SAS. The BCal order is first for the MD-11.

The MD-11 is expected to achieve exceptional productivity and fuel efficiency and to be available two to three years earlier than the A340.

THE WEEK

A PALESTINIAN demonstrator, aged 12, was shot dead by Israeli troops in the West Bank town of Nablus on Monday, and at least eight other people were injured by gunfire or stones as protests and demonstrations continued all over the occupied area for the fifth consecutive day.

There has been widespread criticism in Israel and abroad of the use of what is seen by many to be the use of excessive force against the Palestinians and several newspapers have commented on the need to examine the underlying reasons for the recent trouble, one of the longest outbreaks of unrest in the West Bank and Gaza for some years.

The army also ordered the closing of the old campus at Bir Zeit University, near Ramallah, the scene of violent clashes between Palestinian students and security forces during pro-PLO protests last week.

Monday's fatality, the fourth in less than a week, was Ramadan Zaitoun, shot in the head during a demonstration at the Balata refugee camp near Nablus, where a boy, aged 14, was killed by the Israelis under similar circumstances last Friday. Four others were wounded in yesterday's incident.

The present wave of trouble began in earnest last Thursday when two students at Bir Zeit were shot dead during a pro-PLO demonstration.

THE Rev Ian Paisley disrupted a speech by Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher to the European parliament in Strasbourg on Tuesday. The Ulster Loyalist held up a banner and shouted protests against the Anglo-Irish agreement and then had a heated argument with officials.

ISRAEL intervened directly in the increasingly bitter fighting between Shi'ites and Palestinians last week by shelling Palestinian camps in the Sidon area, where the PLO has gained a commanding upper hand over Amal's Shi'ite militiamen.

MANUEL FRAGA last week furled the umbrella patterned in the red and yellow of the Spanish flag that has served as his protective talisman, and finally admitted that the Spain he so badly wanted to lead had passed him by.

The umbrella joined 12 boxes full of memorabilia that Mr Fraga cleared out of his office in Madrid after telling King Juan Carlos that he was resigning as parliamentary leader of Spain's conservative opposition and as head of the Popular Alliance party (AP) that he founded.

AN Iranian-sponsored ceasefire approved in Damascus by all key players except Mr Yasser Arafat's mainstream Fatah faction of the PLO became the second ceasefire in nine days to escape notice in Beirut. A new massacre of Palestinian civilians has come to light in the tenth week of the latest fighting between Palestinians and the Shi'ite movement, Amal.

SOME 100,000 fresh troops from all over Iran, waving flags and chanting slogans, gathered in a Tehran stadium to hear speeches by Iranian leaders before leaving for the Gulf war fronts.

Wearing headbands of the "Army of Mohammed," the men headed for battle stations where Iranian leaders have been threatening a major offensive against Iraq by the end of the Iranian year next March.

NORTH KOREA has become one of Iran's chief suppliers of military hardware and is suspected of providing training facilities for international terrorists, according to diplomatic sources in Pyongyang.

This year North Korea is said to have delivered 60 MIG 19 or MIG 21 jet fighter planes which may have been built in addition to light weapons.

The sales are valued at between $150 million and $400 million and diplomats believe the extent of the sales depends on North Korea's ability to ship oil from Iran.

A SISTER of the legendary African leader, Robert Sobukwe, and her husband, have been killed in a township outside Pretoria, apparently in a well-planned assassination.

Mrs Barbara Ribiero and Dr Fabian Ribiero, an anti-apartheid activist, were killed outside their home in Mamelodi on Monday night by two masked gunmen.

Neighbours claimed the killers, who wore balaclavas, were white. They said the gunmen escaped in a saloon car and a Jeep, changing vehicles some distance from the shooting and firing on residents who tried to give chase. The Government's Bureau of Information said the gunmen were black and used a .45 calibre firearm.

SOUTH AFRICAN police have detained at least 13 members of the End Conscription Campaign (ECC) organisation and served 12 other members with restriction orders preventing their involvement in the organisation.

Another five people, including Mr Azaar Cachalia, an executive member of the United Democratic Front (UDF), were also served with restriction orders.

SOUTH AFRICA has denied that Mr Stoffel Botha, Pretoria's Minister for Home Affairs, spoke for the government when he summarily dismissed proposals for the black majority in Natal province to share power with the white minority.

The denial was contained in a letter to the Guardian by Dr Denis Worrall, South Africa's ambassador to London.

The intervention strengthens speculation that the South African government may decide to hold a referendum among Natal's white population before stating its position on the proposals.

A British-born historian, Professor Philip Bonner, was arrested at his home in Johannesburg, and taken to police headquarters where he is being held pending deportation to Britain on December 15.

Professor Bonner has been teaching history at the University of the Witwatersrand for 15 years, having been appointed a professor four years ago. His arrest under a deportation order shocked his colleagues at the university, which has already appealed to the authorities to rescind the order.

Police from the Aliens Branch were reported to be searching for Professor Bonner's wife, Chris. Mrs Bonner is a trade union organiser. She was not with Professor Bonner when he was arrested.

THREE people were killed, more than 30 injured, and more than 3,000 made homeless by the earthquake that shook most of Bulgaria and caused widespread damage in the north and north-east, the BTA news agency said in Sofia on Monday.

NICARAGUA has asked Honduras if it would agree to an international commission investigating the situation on their border.

The Nicaraguan ambassador to the UN, Mrs Nora Astorga, said on Monday, that the commission could be used under UN supervision. She said she would discuss the proposal with the UN Secretary General, Mr Perez de Cuellar.

Tegucigalpa and Washington maintain that Nicaraguan troops have been occupying a buffer zone inside Honduras for most of this year. Honduras also claims that Sandinista troops attacked three Honduran villages on Saturday.

Shultz recalls US ambassador after new hostage disclosures

By Alex Brummer and Michael White in Washington

THE US Secretary of State, Mr George Shultz, on Monday recalled the veteran US ambassador in Beirut, Mr John Kelly, after disclosing that the envoy had been clandestinely involved with the CIA and Lieutenant-Colonel Oliver North in efforts to release hostages in Beirut in the final hours before the mid-term elections.

He stunned Congress and the nation by saying at the first public hearings on the Iran-Contra connection, that he was "shocked" to hear of Mr Kelly's role "after the event," and had ordered him back with any relevant documents for the appraisal of the FBI.

Mr Shultz noted, however, that the "message traffic was destroyed" because of security practice at the Beirut embassy. There may, however, be copies with the CIA and the White House situation room.

Mr Shultz said that his knowledge of the diversion of money to the contras "was non-existent". He had, however, authorised his assistant, Mr Elliot Abrams, to solicit funds from the Sultan of Brunei for assistance of the contras.

The televised hearing on Monday was marked by several admissions by Mr Shultz, in a low key and frequently mournful performance, that perhaps he should have tried harder to find out what was going on. He asserted that fear of leaks had discouraged him.

"Anyone in this town who does something controversial and thinks it can be kept a secret needs his head examined," said an anguished Mr Shultz.

The Brunei connection was roundly criticised on Monday by Representative Stephen Solarz (Democrat, New York), an influential member of the committee, who noted that if the Brunei funds had been used for "military" rather than "humanitarian" purposes this was against the will of Congress.

Although Mr Shultz, as the apparent administration hero on the Iran arms affair, was given a deferential hearing on Monday, the frustrations are building on Capitol Hill over the lack of information coming from the White House despite Mr Reagan's promises of full support.

The chairman of the Senate Intelligence Committee, Senator David Durenberger (Republican, Minnesota), said that the key to what went on was held by Colonel North and his boss, Admiral John Poindexter, both of whom have refused to cooperate with Congress.

He said that if they are unwilling to testify they should tell President Reagan all that they know, and Mr Reagan should "tell the rest of the country". He also announced that he was calling back the CIA director, Mr William Casey, to testify under oath, because earlier testimony "had not been entirely accurate".

Mr Shultz insisted that Congress itself had authorised the soliciting of funds for the contras in 1985, and admitted knowledge of the secret Swiss account. This account was frozen at the weekend at the request of US investigators.

The revelation that Mr Kelly, aged 46 and until 1985 a top European policy-maker, had circumvented his seniors at the State Department and dealt directly with Colonel North and others provides further evidence of the lengths to which the White House was prepared to go to secure the freedom of the US hostages.

According to a dispatch which Mr Shultz read to the House Foreign Affairs Committee, the ambassador met in Washington with the former national security adviser, Mr Robert McFarlane, in July and August of 1986, "who briefed me on the hostage negotiations involving arms to Iran as an inducement."

Mr Kelly added: "Between the dates of October 30 and November 4, 1986, I had numerous conversations with Lieutenant-Colonel Oliver North and Richard Secord." The retired general was an important figure in the resupply operation for the contras.

The timing of this intense period of negotiations involving Mr Kelly and the three main players in the White House basement, but excluding the State Department, is particularly significant.

It coincided with the final days of the mid-term election campaign, during which one hostage, Mr David Jacobsen, was released.

President Reagan and his advisers have maintained throughout the Iran affair that the arms supply channel to Tehran was part of the longer-term strategic effort to open up a diplomatic channel.

It is clear from Mr Kelly's dispatch, and a series of other disclosures including the willingness of the billionaire Mr Ross Perot to put up a ransom, that through much of 1986 the President and the White House were primarily concerned with winning the freedom of the hostages.

Under questioning, Mr Shultz appeared openly to disagree with President Reagan in his view that Iran was no longer supporting terrorism. He said: "We know of many acts of terrorism in which Iran, one way or another, seems to have been connected."

The Attorney-General, Mr Edwin Meese, said in documents released on Monday that the Justice Department was seeking an independent prosecutor to investigate the Iran-Contra connection.

In an application to the special court responsible for selecting an independent prosecutor, Mr Meese said: "The independent counsel should be granted jurisdiction to investigate whether violations of US federal criminal law were committed by Lieutenant-Colonel Oliver North or with other US government officials."

(White House crisis, pages 8, 10, 15, 16, 17.)

Britain wins $10m more contracts for SDI

By Hella Pick

BRITAIN has been awarded five further SDI research contracts, worth $10·1 million. Three of them involve work on defensive systems that could be used in Europe against short-range nuclear missiles.

The contracts were announced by the US Secretary for Defence, Mr Caspar Weinberger, after talks in London this week with the Prime Minister, the Defence Secretary, Mr George Younger, and the Foreign Secretary, Sir Geoffrey Howe.

Britain last year became the first European member of Nato to endorse President Reagan's SDI project by signing a space weapons research agreement with the US. The Government had initially envisaged that Britain might win contracts running into billions, rather than millions of pounds.

But after this week's announcement, the SDI research contracts placed in Britain have now reached $34 million.

The US decision to encourage research in defensive systems against short-range nuclear weapons is designed to emphasise that the Reagan Administration is not only concerned with developing a defensive shield to protect the US mainland against strategic nuclear missiles, and that it is not seeking to "decouple" the European allies.

The other political motive in placing these research contracts in Europe is to secure West European support as the US continues to resist Soviet demands for tough restraints on the development of space weapons.

Mr Weinberger and Mr Younger touched on the delicate question of whether Britain is to buy Awacs early warning planes from the US, rather than continue with the costly Nimrod project. But officials stressed that the Cabinet had not reached a decision, which is expected later this week.

Soviets reorganise approach to foreign trade

By Martin Walker in Moscow

SOVIET factories and industries are to be given the right to buy and sell goods and services on international markets under a dramatic reorganisation of foreign trade.

For the first time, they will be able to make their own decisions as to what foreign technology to import, and may borrow hard currency from the state bank to pay for it.

The new structure which is aimed at "the expansion of the country's export potential, and consolidating the Soviet Union's position in the world economy," is spelt out in a document agreed by the Central Committee of the Communist Party and the Council of Ministers.

The document, entitled Perfection of the Organisation of Managing Foreign Economic Relations, has been obtained exclusively by the Guardian.

The 10-page document is circulating in the central committee, in Government ministries concerned with foreign trade, in Comecon, among academic economists, and in the traditional foreign trade organisations. It is expected to be made public by the end of the year.

Although they are not listed in the document, 21 separate ministries and 70 individual enterprises and factories have already been assigned the right to operate directly in international markets, and to sign commercial contracts on their own behalf from January 1 next year.

For the first time, Soviet enterprises are to be allowed to keep the bulk of the foreign currency they earn, and will thus have a direct incentive to export.

The main sectors include cars, agricultural machinery, machine-tools, medical and scientific instruments, chemical and geological machinery, and selected consumer goods industries, including watch-making, glassware, and jewellery.

Although the reorganisation of foreign trade has been under discussion for over a year, there have been widespread complaints among the Soviet Union's trading partners in Eastern Europe and in the West that no firm decisions had been announced.

In terms of organisation, the most important feature of the reform is to set up a super-ministry to oversee foreign trade. It is to be called the State Foreign Economic Commission of the Council of Ministers of the USSR, and is to be run by Mr Vladimir Kamentsev, who was the Minister of Fisheries until his promotion to a deputy chairman of the Council of Ministers earlier this year.

The document states that the aim of the reform is "a radical improvement of foreign economic activities, and the perfection of trade and economic, currency and financial, and scientific and technical ties with foreign countries, for the sake of speeding up socio-economic progress in our country."

The new commission will also have responsibilities for the whole Soviet bloc. The document says it will "coordinate and execute control over the work of all ministries and departments on carrying out the targets of the programme of scientific-technical progress of Comecon countries up to the year 2000."

The Soviet Union currently accounts for a mere 2 per cent of world trade.

Alfonsin seeks time limit in 'dirty war' trials

By Jeremy Morgan in Buenos Aires

PRESIDENT Raul Alfonsin is expected to have trouble in persuading Congress to pass a proposed Final Point law, setting a time limit on human rights trials.

The bill, announced late on Friday night, would impose what the President called a "reasonable time" for bringing new cases before the courts.

Although he did not specify what limit he wanted, a draft of the six point plan circulating in Congress showed that new cases would have to be opened within 30 days.

The bill may also affect existing trials. Unless formally charged inside 60 days, officials said, officers would also benefit from the "conclusion of legal action". The only exception, it seems, would be cases involving children.

President Alfonsin took over from the military almost three years ago promising to punish those responsible for the disappearance of at least 9,000 people during the military regime's "dirty war."

The about-turn was launched only hours after a civilian court freed Lieutenant Alfredo Astiz, ruling that the Statute of Limitations had expired in the case of Dagmar Hagelin, a Swedish girl who went missing in 1977, one year after the coup.

The deputy leader of the Lower House of Congress, Mr Roberto Silva, a member of the ruling Radical Party, warned that the bill would run into difficulties. "The artificial setting of a deadline will generate controversy" among President Alfonsin's own supporters, he predicted.

Political observers suspect President Alfonsin may look for support from the opposition Peronist movement, where some senior rightwingers have actively lobbied for an amnesty to be applied not only to the military but the Peronist terrorists who are believed to have sparked the crackdown.

Such a strategy would be in line with President Alfonsin's even-handed approach, until now, of punishing both sides in the "dirty war". But a pardon for the terrorists would not go down well in the armed forces.

For the moment, however, the officer corps is well pleased. The head of the joint chiefs of staff, Air Force Brigadier Teodoro Waldner, told graduating officer cadets that the military committed excesses in the "dirty war" and that coups had been wrong in the past, but then went on to insist the "final point" was necessary.

The speech appeared to be a mere formality once the cadets gave a rowdy standing ovation to the son of General Ramon Camps, the former police chief gaoled for 25 years last week on 73 charges of torture.

His deputy, senior police officer Miguel Etchecolatz, was gaoled for 23 years even though he was convicted on more than 90 counts. General Camps' successor as police chief was sentenced to 14 years.

Two senior police officers were acquitted and the judges at the federal appeals court delivered much shorter sentences on two junior members of the police also on trial. A police surgeon, Dr Antonio Berges, was sentenced to six years, and a police corporal, Norberto Cozzani, received four years in gaol.

The president of the six-man court, Judge Guillermo Ledesma, told defence lawyers that "every soldier knows that to kill, torture and rob an indefensible person is a crime."

President Alfonsin had put forward a concept of "due obedience" under which some officers would be absolved on the grounds that they were following orders, provided they were not convicted of committing atrocities or "abhorrent" crimes.

But the judges ruled that "there is no authority superior to the law". Judge Ledesma stressed that subordinates "must disobey an order that does not conform with the law. Man is being of will and not a blind and insensible instrument."

Germans build paper mountain

By Anna Tomforde in Bonn

FIRST there was Chernobyl. Then there was the Rhine pollution. Now it's the Great Unrecycled Paper Mountain. All in all, 1986 has been a bad year for West Germany, environmentally speaking.

Not that the Paper Mountain can be adjudged a disaster — far from it. The problem stems from the considerable success of conservation groups in persuading the average hausfrau to dispose of disposables in an ecologically responsible manner.

For every bottle there is a bank. For every beer or softdrink can, there is a welcome and a future. Each month, on a date advertised in the local paper, collectors call (though never on Sundays) to take away the unwanted and the salvageable. On November 1, a new law sanctified the war on waste, stating that recycling should take priority over cost factors.

But when it comes to waste paper — 5 million tons this year — the system cannot cope. It is piling up on all sides. Back copies of Bild, a welter of Die Welts, discarded Spiegels and heaps of well-thumbed Blicks all add to the difficulties. Spiralling fuel, transport and processing costs mean that much of it will be adjudged unfit for the recycler. This year, the Paper Mountain is set to grow to 800,000 tons.

"First we were told to collect like mad and now, as profits decline, it is suddenly left to us to decide, what to do with our paper," said Mr Helga Rammin, a housewife from Hamburg.

Mr Joery Sudan, of the Federal Association for Paper Raw Materials, admits that the dwindling price for inferior household paper is the main reason for his association's complaint that the Government is encouraging waste accumulation without considering cost factors and industrial capacities. "We have tackled the problem from the wrong end," he asserted. "Collecting has become an end in itself."

While Mr Sudan's association maintains that many firms can hardly cover their petrol costs, the municipal authorities in Hanover, Berliln, and Stuttgart have already been forced to hand out subsidies to private transport and recycling companies to avoid boycotts.

But surveys have shown that the consumer who goes in for recycling to ease his conscience is not so enthusiastic about buying the recycled product. Each year, West Germans buy only about 130,000 tonnes of "grey" recycled paper, compared with 4.5 million tonnes of virgin white writing paper.

Strengthening Russians' legal rights

By Martin Walker in Moscow

AN important new codification of Soviet laws on the rights of the individual, which will significantly reduce the prerogatives of the State and its officials, is now being drafted.

One key effect of the reform will be sharply to increase the role of lawyers in Soviet society and to strengthen the hands of defence lawyers in criminal cases. People facing criminal charges will have the right to a lawyer from the moment that charges are laid, rather than waiting until their court appearance, as at present.

Articles in the Soviet press by legal experts, and television statements by key officials in the Ministry of Justice make it likely that the new code will introduce to Soviet law the principle that all defendants must be presumed innocent until proven guilty.

"Our strategy of social reconstruction is supposed to eliminate negative events and make our legal system a really effective instrument of social development to establish guarantees of legality and strong protection for the rights of the Soviet people," Professor V. Kudryavtsev, a legal expert and member of the Soviet Academy of Sciences, writes in Pravda.

"And on legal rules relating to economic activities, there are two possible rules. Either one may do only that which is expressly permitted or alternatively one may do everything that is not expressly forbidden. Our priority should be the second option, as it unleashes the initiative of the people."

The Minister of Justice, Mr Boris Kravtsov, appeared last week in the new television discussion programme Twelfth Storey, named after the location of the studio where this Soviet version of Question Time, with queries phoned in live from across the country, now takes place each week. It is the outstanding example of the new "Glasnost" or "openness" on Soviet TV.

Mr Kravtsov answered questions from callers who complained that the public did not really know what the laws were, that the laws seemed to have little relation to the formal Soviet constitution, and that ministries and state bodies still persisted in publishing decrees which had the force of law, even though the public were often left ignorant of them.

All this would stop, the Minister promised. The Ministry was working on the publication of a book which would contain all Soviet laws, for sale to the public, so that they could learn just what their rights were.

This point was echoed by Professor Kudryavtsev, writing in Pravda. "No regulations can be legal if they contradict the basic rights and freedoms spelt out in the Soviet constitution," he wrote.

"The practice of establishing various kinds of prohibition and control, of which the citizens are not even informed, will not be permissable — although such things happen in local government and the transport sector.

"It seems that it will be necessary to consolidate significantly the authority of our legal bodies, to eliminate completely cases of interference in this legal process by local organs of authority. To do this, we must protect our judges against interference by outside influence," Professor Kudryavtsev went on.

Another new reform that is being considered, according to Mr Sergei Gusev, vice-president of the Supreme Court, speaking on the Twelfth Storey TV programme, is that Soviet crime statistics will at last be published.

Replying to complaints from the public that nobody was ever acquitted in a Soviet court, Mr Gusev said this was untrue. So far this year in the Moscow court, 640 defendants had been acquitted, and over 2,000 had been given what amounted to a conditional discharge. He did not say what percentage of cases this represented.

Soviet lawyers, who claim that these overdue legal reforms were inspired by Mr Gorbachev, himself a trained lawyer who graduated from the law faculty of Moscow University, say that they have been warned to expect a sharp increase in the number of court actions by the public against officials who have acted illegally or arbitrarily. Although article 58 of the Soviet constitution guarantees the legal right to make such complaints and to gain legal redress, hitherto this has been honoured mainly in the breach.

14 Grenadans sentenced to death

A GRENADAN court last week sentenced to death 14 former soldiers and government officials for murdering the prime minister, Maurice Bishop and gaoled three others for lengthy terms.

One man, Raeburn Nelson, was found not guilty in the deaths of Bishop and 10 others during a coup which sparked a US-led invasion days later.

Those sentenced to death comprised the leadership of the left-wing New Jewel Movement which toppled Bishop on October 19, 1983 — including a former deputy prime minister, Bernard Coard, his wife, Phyllis, and an ex-army commander, Hudson Austin.

Former soldiers, Andy Mitchell, Vincent Joseph and Cosmos Richardson, were found guilty of manslaughter and given prison terms ranging from 30 to 45 years.

The 12-member jury took just under four hours to return verdicts on 196 counts of murder and conspiracy to murder. It took more than an hour for the acting high court chief justice, Mr Denis Byron, to read the sentences because each accused attempted to make a speech before the judge ordered them to stop.

Apart from the Coards and Austin, others sentenced to death were a former mobilisation minister, Selwyn Straenan, a former ambassador to Cuba, Leon Cornwall, former junior ministers Colville McBarnette and Dave Bartholomew, a trade unionist, John Ventour, and soldiers, Liam James, Ewart Layne, Lester Redhead, Callistus Bernard, Christopher Stroude and Cecil Prime.

Bernard led the firing squad which shot Bishop dead. During most of the stormy nine-month trial the defendants were without legal counsel and repeatedly interrupted proceedings by shouting at witnesses and insulting the judge.

Governor's death poses problems for Hong Kong

By D. K. Lewis

THE unexpected death in Peking of the governor of Hong Kong, Sir Edward Youde, has raised new questions about the territory's years of transition before it returns to China in 1997.

Sir Edward, aged 62, died in his sleep on Thursday night at the British embassy in Peking. He had been expected to continue as governor for four or five years.

Sir Edward took up his post in 1982, and was actively involved in the two difficult years of negotiations with China. He was British ambassador to Peking from 1974 to 1978 and vigorously promoted trade and cultural relations during China's period of transition from the age of Mao Tsetung.

By remaining in office till around 1990, Sir Edward would have seen through the present process of political reform in Hong Kong. His successor could then have been chosen — probably from the Hong Kong Chinese community — to guide the territory past the critical year of 1997.

It will now be thought necessary to appoint an interim governor drawn from the ranks of British officialdom to take charge while the political reforms are incomplete.

The acting governor, Sir David Akers-Jones, who is due to retire as Chief Secretary next summer, could be asked to stay on in charge of the administration. But many officials expect Mrs Thatcher to lose no time in sending out an experienced diplomat, almost certainly an "old China hand," to fill the slot.

Dr David Wilson, who played a substantial role in the Sino-British negotiations and who heads the British team in the joint liaison group in Peking, is one of the more obvious possible choices.

The news of Sir Edward's death, especially since it occurred while he was undertaking the last of many strenuous "shuttle diplomacy" missions on behalf of Hong Kong, has been received in Peking with more than conventional sadness. He had been visiting Peking for the official opening of the new Hong Kong Trade Office.

In London, a statement from the Prime Minister's office said Mrs Thatcher was "deeply distressed" to hear of Sir Edward's death. "She regarded him as an outstanding civil servant who had worked selflessly for Hong Kong's interests and it was characteristic that he was serving Hong Kong at the end," the statement said.

When Sir Edward arrived in Hong Kong as governor in 1982, he was described by his predecessor, Lord Maclehose, as "the true professional," and he lived up to this description. In the two years leading up to the initialling of the agreement on Hong Kong in September, 1984, he travelled the world on the colony's behalf in a series of journeys which frequently allowed only a few hours' interval in Hong Kong itself.

He brought to this diplomatic effort the assets of fluency in Mandarin and the respect he had already won in Peking as ambassador there.

Sir Edward's links with China went back to the end of the civil war which brought Mao to power. As first secretary at the British embassy he was awarded the MBE in 1949 for crossing Communist lines in a vain attempt to arrange a truce to save the disabled frigate HMS Amethyst.

One measuree of Sir Edward's achievement is the manner in which he outlived an early campaign of denigration which portrayed im as ineffective and unpretentious. In the next four years he confounded his critics.

North, Poindexter invoke Fifth Amendment

IN refusing to testify before the Senate Intelligence Committee, by invoking what is colloquially known as "the Fifth" Vice-Admiral John Poindexter and Lieutenant-Colonel Oliver North have joined a growing band of post-war Americans who have refused to come clean before Congress.

For men such as Admiral Poindexter and Colonel North, the action-orientated, crusading anti-Communists of the Reagan National Security apparatus, there is a strong irony in their decision to protect themselves from incrimination by invoking the Fifth Amendment. As a legal device, widely used over the last three decades, it was finely honed in the early 1950s during the late Senator Joseph McCarthy's witch-hunt against communism in high places, from Hollywood to the State Department in Washington.

As a result of Joseph McCarthy's demagoguery during the Korean war, when the phrase "Fifth Amendment Communists" became a vile term of abuse, any mention of the Fifth still leaves bile in the throat for many Americans. This despite the fact that several of those called, such as playwright Lillian Hellman, were not Communists at all and those who were had no intention of overturning the American government as McCarthy and his henchmen alleged.

The bad image of the Fifth has been reinforced over the years by the kind of people who have chosen to take it. The late Senator Robert F. Kennedy, in his classic 1960 book on the Congressional effort to clean up the corruption in America's unions, The Enemy Within, details how union boss Jimmy Hoffa used *the Fifth to hide* from *Congressional investigations. When questioned before the investigating committees Hoffa would plead ignorance and then refer the committee to an associate who would take the Fifth.*

"It was irritating," Robert Kennedy wrote, "and nothing more than a way for Hoffa to avoid the stigma of taking the Fifth directly, a *trick* he used repeatedly."

More recently the Fifth amend*ment* also became a feature of the Watergate hearings. In its determination to get to the bottom of the Nixon scandal, the Senate Watergate committee conferred immunity on some 27 witnesses called before it, after they had invoked the Fifth. This immunity to prosecution was granted even though the Watergate special prosecutor requested that Congress postpone its hearings lest the publicity compromise later criminal hearings.

It is against this tortured history that Colonel North and Admiral Poindexter's decisions to repeatedly plead the Fifth when called before the Senate intelligence committee on the Iran-Contra connection has caused such public and congressional indignation. One member of the Senate intelligence committee, the sharp-tongued Senator Ernest Hollings of South Carolina, said: "We are coming down into quicksand if Colonel North takes the Fifth and we give him immunity, and before long we catch the President."

Their position has been particularly harshly condemned because of President Reagan's own promises made in his brief address last week to the American people. In that speech, which was aimed at clearing the air, Mr Reagan assured Americans that his two former *National Security Advisers*, Mr Robert McFarlane and Admiral Poindexter, would co-operate fully with Congress as would other officials. That Colonel North took the Fifth some 40 times (perhaps a record) has served to confirm public prejudice that there is a criminal cover-up.

In reality, of course, all that Admiral Poindexter and Colonel North are doing — like those giving testimony in the McCarthy era — is preserving rights. Lawyer David Goldstein, of the American Civil Liberties Union, noted that the legal roots of the Fifth Amendment, which is part of America's Bill of Rights, stem from fears among the early colonists that a "star chamber" system, of the kind finally abolished by the Long Parliament in 1641, would be instituted in the new world. Religious dissidents, for instance, might be forced into incriminating themselves by admitting they belonged to an outlawed church.

"If I were their attorney," Mr Goldstein noted, "I would have recommended that they take the Fifth as a start." He noted that it was historical procedure specifically designed to protect the innocent, not to confirm the guilty as it is currently presented. The editor and author Mr Victor Navasky pointed out that in the first anti-Communist hearings of the late 1940s the Hollywood Ten, including such men as Ring Lardner Junior, the creator of MASH, had sought to plead First Amendment rights of freedom of speech and ended up in gaol.

It was only subsequently, as the McCarthy persecution intensified, that the ultimate defence of the Fifth was resorted to by those being hounded for membership of or association with members of the Communist Party. The point was, according to Mr Navasky, that "95 per cent of all those called who took the Fifth had been members of the Communist Party". If this had been admitted they would have been subject to prosecution because in the Cold War era the Communist Party was outlawed.

There seem two main reasons why Colonel North and Admiral Poindexter have decided to invoke the Fifth Amendment. First, it provides them and their lawyers with time to sift through the material and ensure that when and if they do testify they get their evidence right and there is no risk of perjury. The CIA Director Mr William Casey, whose first appearance was voluntary, has already been forced to withdraw some testimony, saying he mis-spoke when he said that the CIA was not involved in a critical arms delivery.

More importantly, however, is the question of immunity. The Senate, as the Watergate cases showed, has the right to grant such immunity from prosecution if witnesses cooperate. But if such negotiated immunity cannot be obtained it is able to go to court and seek an order barring any criminal prosecution and thereby forcing witnesses to testify.

Once granted immunity Colonel North, who has publicly promised a "full exposition", and Admiral Poindexter, a far more closed-mouth figure, could be faced with a further agonising choice. They can go before the Senate and tell all they know, including details which may embarrass their superiors including their Commander-in-Chief and President: not the sort of thing military officers really like to do. However, if they hold their silence after being given immunity they could be cited for contempt and end up in prison anyway.

By Alex Brummer in Washington

Carlucci moves over to Security

By Harold Jackson in Washington

MR FRANK CARLUCCI, until recently president of the world's largest retail company, is the fifth man in six years to take over the high-risk job of Mr Reagan's National Security adviser.

Two of his predecessors, Mr Richard Allen and Admiral John Poindexter, were summarily sacked. Two others, Mr William Clark and Mr Robert McFarlane, left unexpectedly, with no clear reason being given for their departure.

The new man arrives with a long — though unproven — history of alleged involvement in covert US intelligence operations. He himself has acknowledged being accused of complicity in the assassination of the Congolese President Patrice Lumumba, in the CIA-organised overthrow of President Allende of Chile, and in the fall of President Goulart of Brazil and of President Karume of Zanzibar. In Italy, he was accused of complicity in the kidnapping of Aldo Moro.

During a Congressional hearing, Mr Carlucci commented: "Moscow propaganda has consistently labelled me an expert in subversion." Now aged 56, he has a long background of government service for both Republican and Democratic administrations.



Frank Carlucci

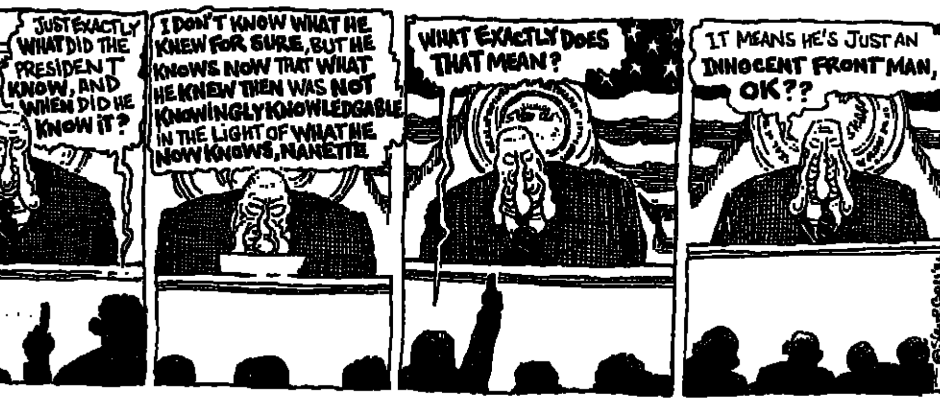
After serving as a naval gunner during the Korean war, he became a foreign service officer during the Eisenhower years — claimed by many to have been a cover for his intelligence activities.

Under President Nixon he became director of the Office of Economic Opportunity and then director of the Office of Management and Budget, run at the time by Mr Caspar Weinberger, now Defence Secretary.

President Ford appointed him US ambassador to Portugal in 1974, where he was credited with working closely with the West German Chancellor, Mr Helmut Schmidt, to secure funds for the struggling Social Democratic Party and so averting a Communist government in Lisbon.

President Carter called on him in 1978 to serve as deputy director of the Central Intelligence Agency under Admiral Stansfield Turner. After Mr Reagan's succession to the White House in 1981, Mr Weinberger was said to have insisted on having Mr Carlucci as his deputy before he would agree to take over at the Pentagon.

Mr Carlucci's association with the President goes back to 1970 when Mr Reagan was Governor of California. He played a central role in Mr Reagan's long and bitter fight with a body called California Rural Legal Assistance, which took the Governor to court after he had cut state funds for the rural poor. Mr Carlucci was credited with some complex federal politicking which eventually helped Mr Reagan's case.



Speakes quits as President's press secretary

MR LARRY SPEAKES, the White House spokesman whose resignation was announced last week, was thrust to prominence by the Reagan Administration's first major crisis — the assassination attempt on the President in March, 1981.

The man most severely wounded by the gunman was not Mr Reagan but his press secretary at the time, Mr Jim Brady. Though confined to a wheelchair and still seriously affected by his injuries, Mr Brady has continued to hold the formal title of White House Press Secretary.

Mr Speakes, nominally only Mr Brady's deputy for the past six years, in reality assumed the burden of explaining Reaganism to the world. A Mississippian who is now 47, he had earlier worked for the Nixon and Ford administrations, and joined the Reagan White House after a period as an executive with a large public relations firm. Now he is joining Merrill Lynch.

He has held his position longer than any White House Press Secretary except President Eisenhower's, but has never been one of the President's inner circle. Certainly he never came anywhere near achieving the policy-making role given to Jody Powell in the Carter years.

Though Mr Speakes was eventually allowed to attend meetings of the National Security Council and other major policy discussions, his briefings to the White House press corps have frequently been both confusing and acrimonious. He has never been popular with correspondents, and he returned their animosity.

In the wake of the recent row about the Administration's disinformation campaign against Libya — which brought the indignant resignation of the State Department spokesman — Mr Speakes acknowledged that he had used his own briefings to "shape" events abroad.

In a sharp response, the New York Times referred acidly to the press secretary's "mixture of smartness, cunning, and aggressiveness," and noted that he was "not well-versed in the substance and nuances of foreign policy" — a criticism which could, of course, be made of the higher levels of the Administration.

In the hot-house climate of the White House press room, where the unending pressure of events and deadlines leads to frequent rows and exchanges of insults, Mr Speakes was often perceived as both sexist and racist.

Women correspondents have repeatedly complained of discriminatory treatment, and the press secretary was obliged to offer as near a public apology as he could contrive after he had appeared to make a deliberately slighting reference to the Administration's new chief economic adviser, Dr Martin Feldstein, a Jewish professor from Harvard.

Swiss act on Rhine pollution

By Tom Woodford In Berne

SWITZERLAND is ready to take far-reaching action to prevent a recurrence of last month's Rhine pollution disaster, President Alphons Egli told a rare joint session of both houses of the Swiss Parliament in Berne last week.

The President said the fire at a Basle warehouse which spilled tons of toxic chemicals into the Rhine had destroyed in a single night Switzerland's reputation for environmental care.

But his statement stopped short of outright criticism of the pharmaceuticals industry, and referred to its key role in the Swiss economy.

The cause of the blaze at the Sandoz warehouse was still unknown and it was too early to assess blame or the extent of Switzerland's international responsibility, he said.

Mr Egli, who is also Switzerland's Environment Minister, said the international alert system, which was criticised after the fire, should be overhauled and Swiss security procedures brought into line with the European Community's "Seveso" code.

And he left open the possibility of a government study, leading to an absolute ban on the production and storage of certain substances.

Mr Egli's speech came less than a day after roads were blocked and electricity supplies cut off around a factory at Pratteln on the Rhine when some 50 litres of highly inflammable liquid gas escaped into the sewage system.

20th CENTURY POX

Drawing by Peter Clarke

Sense and stupidity about Aids

By Larry Gostin

THE US Secretary for Health commissioned Professor William Curran and myself at the Harvard School of Public Health to advise the government on methods of combating the Aids epidemic. Our report has now been sent to the Secretary of State. A second report comes from the US National Academy of Science, which includes our group at Harvard.

There is a chilling consensus on the severity of the disease. Between a million and a million and a half people are already infected in the US. By 1991, more than 179,000 deaths from Aids are expected — 54,000 of those in that year alone. The disease is likely to envelop the gay and intravenous drug user population in America and dramatically begin to spread to heterosexuals and children, with 7,000 and 3,000 cases respectively by 1991. Blacks and hispanics make up a disproportionately high percentage of Aids patients. The development of a vaccine is at least five years away and in spite of recent publicity to the drug AZT, effective and safe drugs may also be years away.

The National Academy of Science recommends a bold new strategy for combating the disease that pulls together the governmental, industrial and academic sectors. It calls past federal education efforts "woefully inadequate". Some members were openly hostile to President Reagan, who since the epidemic was first apparent in 1981, has refused to accept more [illegible] the money that Congress has allocated to Aids every year.

The Academy recommends a national commission to monitor national Aids efforts, advise the government, bring together disparate organisations and periodically report to the American public. The President, it says, should designate control of the epidemic as the Government's top domestic priority.

Everyone favours education on Aids. But for the "new conservatives" this means teaching abstinence and the avoidance of "intimate bodily contact". In New York City, a video on Aids for school children, has been censured because it graphically discusses "safe sex" between gays. Public officials are hampering their own efforts to communicate effectively to high risk groups.

This silence must end. We can no longer afford to sidestep frank, open discussions about sexual practices, whether homosexual or heterosexual. Young men and women will not abstain from sex, and so need direct information about how to enjoy sexual encounters in a reasonably safe and responsible way. They must know and trust their sexual partners, and consistently use a condom during the entire encounter.

Many school boards in America would prefer to ban infected children and teachers from schools. This has been done in large states, including New York, New Jersey and California. The US Supreme Court is currently hearing a case which will determine whether school boards have the right to exclude teachers with an infectious disease. Predictably, the Reagan administration has urged the Court to allow discrimination against people with the Aids virus. But the administration's argument is ludicrous and ignores all the scientific evidence.

We recommend that the government allow children and teachers with Aids virus to attend school. Even though the Aids virus has been found in tears and saliva, it has, to our knowledge, never been communicated in a school setting or casually. Exclusion from school denies the child the right to association with his or her peers.

The "new right" in America is calling for tough measures to prevent the spread of Aids. These include quarantine, branding Aids patients in their private parts to warn future sexual partners, aggressively tracing sexual contacts and instituting new criminal [illegible] patients who have sex. California has a referendum on the ballot which would authorise quarantine and imprisonment of people with the Aids virus. In one national poll, 42 per cent of Americans supported the quarantine of all Aids patients, and at least one state has amended its quarantine law to allow the detention of recalcitrant Aids patients.

Yet the suggestion of a widespread quarantine is ludicrous. It would be unmanageable. The detention would have no time limit. The virus is not spread casually, so isolation from society is unnecessary.

Most public health officials recognise the absurdity of quarantines, but some do favour making it a criminal offence knowingly to transmit the virus. Already, numerous cases are pending in which Aids patients are charged with attempted murder for biting or spitting at police or others. More worrying is the case in Texas, where a man with Aids boasts that he continues to frequent gay clubs and prostitute himself. Should such a person be able knowingly to infect others with a lethal disease?

Clearly, if the police have evidence beyond a reasonable doubt that a person has had intercourse with another, intending to cause grave harm, they must act. But widespread use of the criminal law would give the police a licence for entrapment in gay clubs, restrooms, hotels and private homes. If sex with an infected person were a crime, this would place the entire gay community at risk of prosecution as the virus spreads. Victims would be branded as criminals. Once the criminal law tries to invade the privacy of the bedroom Big Brother will be well and truly with us.

The British Government is now under similar pressure, particularly from Conservative MPs, to get tough on Aids carriers. The World Health Organisation cites Britain and other Western European countries as one of the probable areas for the spread of the disease in the next decade. So what course should the Whitelaw Commission take?

We suggest a similar course to the one followed in the two reports to the US Government. First, an unprecedented public health education campaign aimed at both the general public and high risk groups, should give explicit guidance on "protected sex," and, for drug users, on the acquisition and use of free sterile needles. When a new brand of cigarettes is intro[illegible] the company expects to spend more than £85 millions. How much should the British government be prepared to spend to make health available to the public?

Second, the Whitelaw Commission should plan for widespread voluntary testing for the Aids virus. People at high risk should be offered prompt and anonymous testing, [illegible]al services. Testing should also be available at centres for the treatment of drug dependency and sexually transmitted diseases. Such services must also include professional, free counselling.

Third, drug treatment, detoxification and venereal disease clinics must be rapidly expanded, to prevent high risk activities which lead to the spread of the virus.

Fourth, the Commission must begin a comprehensive long-term plan to develop health and social services to care for and support Aids patients. Care can become both more compassionate and more efficient through expansion of out-of-hospital and home care, social support — particularly for such socially disfranchised groups as drug users — and mental health services for the increasing number of people with Aids dementia. (In the US more than 40 per cent of all Aids patients are suffering from deep neurological and psychological problems.)

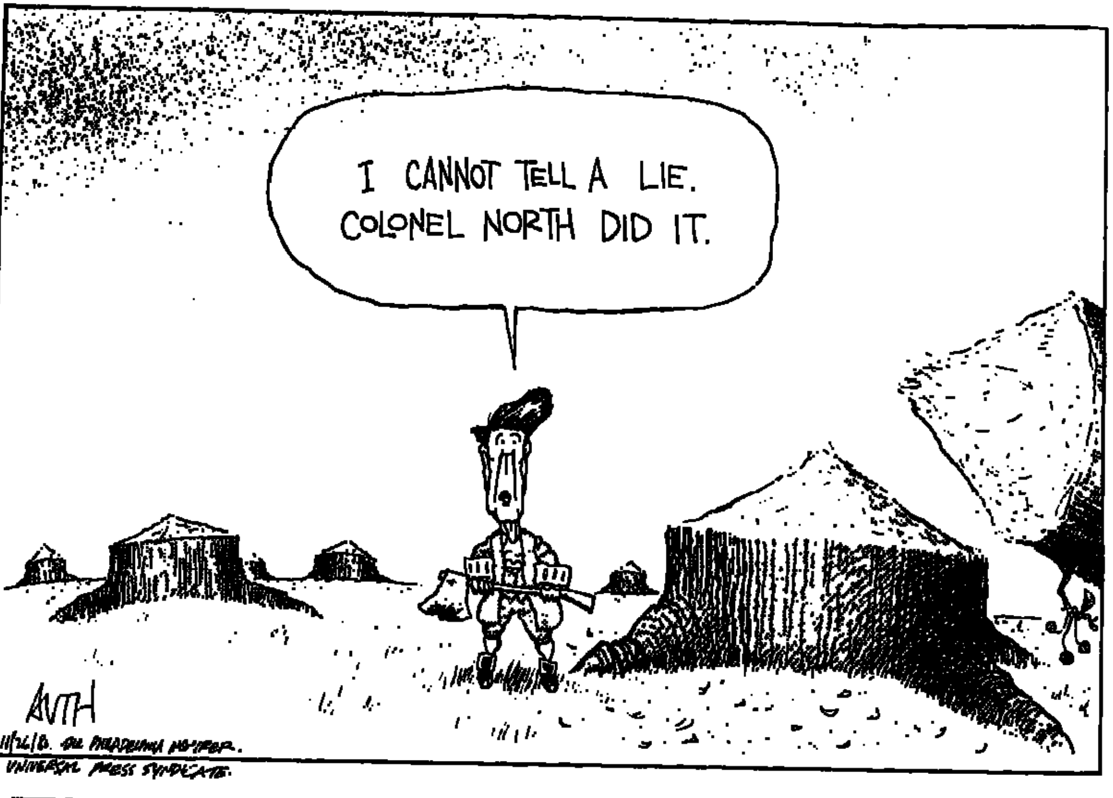
Finally, specific laws should be introduced to guarantee the confidentiality of test information and prohibit employment, housing, and other discrimination against patients with the Aids virus. The denial of life insurance is a particular problem.

The World Health Organisation has asked us to carry out a worldwide survey of legislative strategies to combat Aids. We would like to see countries like Great Britain and the United States become innovators in controlling this pandemic.

Larry Gostin is executive director of the American Society of Law and Med[illegible]

Time bomb under the Presidency

By Harold Jackson in Boston



AS America's Iranian arms scandal continues to unroll under Congressional pressure, it has become evident that Lieutenant-Colonel Oliver North's decision to invoke his Fifth amendment rights against self-incrimination at last week's Senate intelligence committee hearing was probably an effort to mask his close links with former US intelligence agents of highly questionable reputation.

The tortuous line of North's associations leads back to one of the Central Intelligence Agency's most notorious renegades, Mr Edwin Wilson. He is now serving a 52-year sentence in the maximum security federal prison in Marion, Illinois.

He was convicted of crimes ranging from incitement to murder to illegally shipping arms to Libya, but his assets are still officially listed as $13 million and the federal bankruptcy authorities have located properties in his name in Britain, Egypt, Libya, Israel and Iran.

Wilson set up an intricate network of American and European import-export companies as the vehicle for his dealings. Among those still working at the CIA who dealt with him, and who were presumably aware of at least some of his activities, was Mr Theodore Shackley, once the CIA station chief in Laos.

In the 1960s, immediately after the Bay of Pigs fiasco, Shackley had run one of the CIA's biggest covert operations, known as Operation Mongoose. At an annual cost of more than $50 million, and employing several thousand Americans and Cubans, it conduct[illegible] paramilitary operations against Fidel Castro's regime.

At the time of his association with Wilson, Shackley worked as the CIA's deputy director of operations (responsible for covert activities), and had had a long association with another senior CIA officer, Thomas Clines. Both men narrowly escaped prosecution for their links with Wilson.

Clines, who employed Shackley as a consultant after he had left the CIA, was an old friend of Major-General Richard Secord, the US Air Force officer chosen by President Reagan in 1981 to be Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defence responsible for the Middle East.

General Secord had had his own connections with the CIA, initially from being used by the agency as a pilot for clandestine operations in Laos during the Vietnam war. He apparently maintained his contacts with the agency, and, according to former associates, had what has been described as "an open line" to North in his National Security Council office at the White House.

It is still far from clear, and may never be established, just who did what in this chain. Not least of the oddities in the present furore is that the only official White House account of the Iranian-Nicaraguan affair was written at the President's request by North.

[illegible] is still being used by the administration to defend its actions. It was the basis of the account offered to Congress on November 21 by the CIA director William Casey. Yet it maks no mention of one of the key facts revealed by the Attorney General, Edwin Meese, in his first public statement on the affair — that profits from the arms sale were diverted to the Nicaraguan Contras.

An exasperated State Department official told the Los Angeles Times at the weekend, "Oliver North had complete discretionary control of several million dollars the whole time and no one — no one — knows where it went."

Secord seems to be the pivotal link in many of the transactions. Now a private citizen, he has Albert Hakim, an Iranian arms dealer, as a business associate. The two were introduced to one another in Tehran, where the general was running the US Air Force's military assistance group. The intermediary in this introduction was Edwin Wilson.

The discovery of Secord's association with Wilson led to his early resignation from the Air Force in 1983. He then became president of the Stanford Technology Trading group, a company set up by Hakim. According to a New York Times investigation, the company's Swiss office in Geneva had the same addr[illegible] financial agency used to shunt the Iranian arms money to the Nicaraguan Contras.

Hakim was a long-standing friend of Edwin Wilson's and admitted during a civil case in Connecticut three years ago that he had disbursed some $6 million in bribes in return for military contracts. At about that time he is reported to have offered large sums to Wilson for details of his CIA contacts.

A crucial figure in the dealings with Tehran was another Iranian arms dealer, Manucher Ghorbanifar. He was contacted by the Israeli intermediary in the affair, Al Schwimmer, a former head of Israel's aircraft manufacturing company. Later in the negotiations the one-time Israeli military attache to Iran, Yaacov Nimrodi, was brought in.

After a number of complex manoeuvres — and a reported plot to send the Iranians defective anti-tank missiles — 100 missiles were sent in a first consignment, followed by a further 400. More than $4 million was reported to have been passed to the Israeli government from this deal and then into a Swiss bank account.

Clines is the man who recruited the pilots and other staff needed to fly clandestine supplies to the Contras — one of whose planes was shot down on October 6 by the Nicaraguans. [illegible]vor, Eugene Hasenfus, was sentenced on November 15 to 30 years imprisonment.

In many cases the aircraft manifests showed that the C-130s left the United States under charter to the State Department, hired for the wholly legal carriage of the humanitarian supplies allowed by Congress to be sent to the Contras.

The State Department has commented that it had no reason to know how the planes were used after they had fulfilled its contracts, but it was plainly convenient to the arms shippers that a major portion of their initial transport costs had already been met from US Government funds.

This is only one of the shadowy links between the State Department and the questionable movement of funds. It emerged at the weekend that the Sultan of Brunei was persuaded by the Secretary of State, George Shultz, to make several million dollars available for the use of the Contras.

The cash eventually wound up in the same Swiss bank account as the profits passed through by the Israelis from the Iranian arms sale. This account was administered by North, and there still seems to be no clear information about how much it contained and precisely what happened to the cash.

Meese gave an estimate ranging from $10 million to $30 million. There has never been any suggestion of personal gain, but there is growing anger and concern on Capitol Hill that vast sums of government money were apparently used with little or no executive control.

One of Hakim's roles in the business seems to have been to offer his unrivalled knowledge of the byways of international arms dealing, and the near-invisible passage of large amounts of money from country to country.

Among the legitimate businessmen brought into this vortex was H. Ross Perot, the Texas billionaire, who has said that in May this year he was asked by North to make cash available for possible use as ransom money to secure the release of the American hostages held in the Lebanon.

The picture whch emerges of North's activities is of a group of long-term CIA associates in the covert action business who have combined to circumvent a wide range of political and legal controls on American policy. From his White House office, the Colonel seems to have been at the centre of a network of operators, many of whom have in the past shown only a marginal regard for the legality of their actions.

The key uncertainty, however, is whether he was following orders or vastly exceeding his [illegible] This question is the time bomb ticking beneath the Reagan administration, and the answer is now being sought with increasing interest by members of Congress. Even in the first few days of the scandal, a remarkable number of skeletons have rattled in the National Security Council's cupboards.

Mr Reagan and the debris from Tehran

NO TRULY democratic nation has a vested interest in tearing those who govern it — and thus in a very real sense — itself, to pieces. If, constitutionally, the government in power is there willy nilly for another two years, the need for care and prudence becomes even more manifest. Somebody has to be president of the United States until the first days of 1989. If it isn't Mr Reagan, it will be Mr Bush. And an administration shredded by insistent criticism long before that date is an administration which will do the people of the United States, the voters, a profound and painful disservice.

So everyone is trying to calm down a little. Mr Reagan seems to have found himself (from somewhere or other) a new pretty decisive advisor. Frank Carlucci is the new Chief of the National Security Council. The wild array of Congressional inquiries has been funnelled (perhaps) towards the single, inescapable figure of a special prosecutor. Attorney General Meese isn't havering around any longer, wondering whether there might be some criminality here. He's leading the charge for legal retribution. In short, Mr Reagan and those he relies upon so heavily are trying to regain a little of the initiative: and not making too bad a fist of it. Even the most irate of Democrats know that they have to strike a balance of true national interest in their onslaughts. At least the threshing chaos of the first few days may be abating.

But no one, for a second, should conclude that, because voices are lowered, the Tehran affair itself may soon dip beyond the horizon. There is absolutely no sign of that. Quite the contrary. Day by day the administration's efforts to create a cordon sanitaire of responsibility around the departed North and Poindexter grow ever more futile. The obvious questions are getting answers. This CIA-operated bank account in Switzerland, for instance. What did the Agency know about it? Was the account (as is now confidently asserted) a wholesale conduit for arms for cash to every Reagan-approved cause under the sun: not just the Contras, but Afghan rebels as well? Can that possibly have operated without Mr William Casey, the CIA chief, knowing?

Other reports pages 8, 15, 16, 17

The President himself, when he speaks without a teleprompter, still seems unable to get the facts into any coherent context. He told Time magazine a story about the genesis of the affair which flatly contradicts the version his aides still seek to propagate on the record. He piles blame upon the Israelis which the Israeli government shows no sign of shouldering. He appears oblivious to the CIA's role in the running of the bank account. Any special prosecutor worth his salt, frankly, is going to turn up a long string of damaging revelations. He may not nail the conspiracy to the door of the Oval Office. Mr Reagan continues to display such a sketchy grasp of the facts that that seems incredible. But, equally, the size of the illicit operation is so large and spreading, that more heads — Casey, Donald Regan — must be close to rolling. And the nature of the White House, a composite of old pals rather than a gathering of professional talents, is that any substantial cancer in one part of the team will automatically infect the entire enterprise.

So the calm may be fleeting and deceptive. The combination of electoral ambition and administrative corruption will plague Mr Reagan through his last couple of years. There will be some self-imposed limits on the process, to be sure. But only a sweeping house-cleaning at this stage — the replacement not just of Poindexter, but of several of the most senior figures — stands any chance of drawing the line under the affair and allowing a semblance of business as usual. But can the President grasp the enormity of what needs to be done? Not at the moment, when his heart is full of bitterness for the "sharks" of the Washington press corps. And if he waits for his special prosecutor to precipitate renewed crisis, he may have left everything too late.

Le Monde ENGLISH SECTION

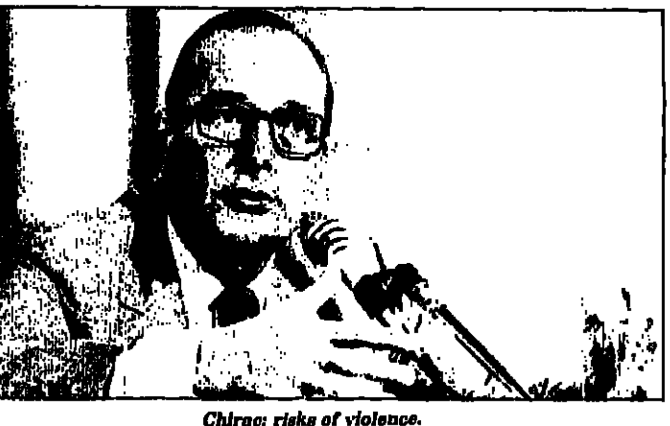
Chirac pulls back from the brink

By Patrick Jarreau and Jean-Yves Lhomeau

THIS was how Jacques Chirac announced his decision on the students crisis: "After a meeting with the Minister of Education, I called in the minister to tell them what I had decided. No modification, however necessary it may be, can be successfully carried out without broad support from all the parties concerned, in this case students and teachers. It can moreover be done only in an atmosphere of calm.

"It is clear this is not the case today. The current demonstrations, with all the risks of violence and the dangers they entail for all, show it. This is why I have decided to withdraw the present draft bill.

"I have asked the Minister of Education to begin broad nationwide and regional consultations immediately to work out measures that will allow French universities to adapt to the changes in the modern world, to meet the legitimate cultural and employment aspirations of our youth and the ambitions of France."



Chirac: risks of violence.

By the end of last week several government ministers were tilting towards a withdrawal of the draft bill. This was true of Pierre Méhaignerie, president of the CDS (Centre Démocratique et Social), who disagreed with his fellow party member, Education Minister René Monory, on this point. To meet this concern, Finance Minister Edouard Balladur unsuccessfully tried to persuade Monory to use the term "withdrawal" in his televised address on Friday, December 5, in which he announced he had set aside the bill's three disputed clauses.

More pressure was put on the government following Oussoukine's death by Republican Party members François Léotard and Alain Madelin, with the latter pointing out that the Devaquet bill was "not worth a death". The bill was also criticised by François d'Aubert, spokesman of the members of the Majority loyal to former Prime Minister Raymond Barre.

It was only after he had considered other options that Chirac decided to withdraw the bill. Among these was the possibility of submitting a new text followed by a cabinet meeting, but the ensuing delay was hardly compatible with the closure of this session of parliament on December 20. He is also said to have considered giving a right of oversight to the President, who could object to the bill being put down on the Cabinet agenda. These two difficulties could have been got around by submitting a draft bill (of parliamentary origin) or, finally, by rewriting the text through amendments, which had the inconvenience of presenting the Devaquet text as the starting point of a new debate.

The first student reactions to the withdrawal of the bill expressed both joy and bitterness. Joy over the withdrawal which they saw as a victory. Bitterness that the decision came after an escalation of violence which could have been averted had the government's thinking processes been more rapid.

(December 8)

Prime Minister Jacques Chirac presented a proposal for new Western European charter of security principles to the Assembly of the seven-nation (France, Britain, West Germany, Italy and the three Benelux countries) Western European Union (WEU) meeting in Paris on December 1 and 2. "European construction," he noted, "which has gone quite far in the economic sphere, is faltering in security matters where Western Europe frequently gives the impression of being a pawn of forces out of its control. Such a state of affairs is unacceptable for all those who plan to work towards asserting Europe's identity."

Charter for defence

COMMENT

WELCOME helping hand from the media for the Western European Union and a reminder of the broad principles that deserve to be examined, but what concrete follow-up will there be? You could doubtless sum up in this way the reaction of many Western European Union parliamentarians after Jacques Chirac's address on Tuesday last week.

This was the first occasion in many years — the last one goes back to Georges Pompidou in 1962 — that a French Prime Minister had attended the Assembly of the Western European Union. Coming as it did after so many initiatives, all more or less unsuccessful, to reactivate the WEU and persisting rumours to the effect that the new man in the Matignon had no particular liking for this organisation, Chirac's gesture was appreciated. All the more so as the WEU has been suffering from an identity crisis almost since its inception in 1954, and also from the fact that, following the collapse of the European Defence Community project, many governments patently went off the Union and were little inclined to pay serious attention to something that initially had set out to be the "pillar of Nato".

The "Western European Charter of Security Principles" proposed by Chirac hinges in fact on two central ideas, which do not look very new, especially in France, where they have understandably been cleared without much difficulty by the Elysée.

The first is that nuclear deterrence remains the only way of guaranteeing peace in Europe: it has, after a fashion, preserved the continent from any real conflicts since World War II, not counting the Soviet camp's internal convulsions. What this means is that abandoning the logic of deterrence, especially by opting for a system of space-based defence (an uncertain venture incidentally) is dangerous. France and Britain, both WEU members, are making a specifically European contribution to this deterrence which could help to strengthen the continent politically.

Secondly, we should be concerned at anything that might result in a defence uncoupling of Europe from the United States whether that takes the form of Washington falling back behind its future space shield or a Soviet-American agreement on the famous zero option which, after the possible dismantling of Nato and the Warsaw Pact, would end up by leaving Western Europeans facing the East's far superior conventional forces.

It is clear that Chirac has in this way voiced the fears of a good many Europeans after the Reykjavik summit, where Ronald Reagan and Mikhail Gorbachev apparently came very close to agreement on such a dismantling. US Defence Secretary Caspar Weinberger, who was passing through Paris, tried hard to reassure the Prime Minister by ruling out any threat of a uncoupling.

The paradox does exist for all that. After having so dreaded the consequences, for their own continent, of longstanding arms race between the two superpowers, the Europeans now seem to be apprehensive of disarmament or, to be more precise, of the conception of a deceptive balance of disarmament.

(December 4)

US weakness means Europe must stick together

By Jacques Amalric

MANY EUROPEAN leaders are becoming concerned about the repercussions of the current power crisis in Washington which has been caused by revelations of arms sales to Iran (President Reagan's popularity rating took a 23-point dive, but later rallied when the President endorsed a proposal to call a special inquiry). The crisis was at the centre of the questions European leaders were asking as they gathered in Paris last week for the Assembly of the Western European Union (WEU). Prime Minister Jacques Chirac submitted a proposal for a Western European charter of security principles to the meeting.

For various reasons, European leaders are saying what they feel only in private, but many of them are becoming increasingly concerned about the situation in the United States and the repercussions that the course of these events might have on East-West relations. This latent concern — which is as noticeable in Paris as in London, Bonn or Rome, to name only a few capitals — was touched off by American slip-ups at Reykjavik. True, the fears arose only in retrospect, but they have since been fuelling a spate of discussion among Europeans.

Things were made worse by President Reagan's decision to stop abiding, by the strategic arms limits set in the SALT 2 accord and by the disclosure of American arms sales to Iran. Though no official spokesman will admit it in public, the question now being asked at the highest level in European capitals is indeed about the credibility of an American administration that has two more years to go. Those who are familiar with the United States have already written Reagan off as a lame duck — a powerless President with no grip on events since he is not even eligible for re-election.

The lies and omissions still surrounding the arms deliveries to Iran and the diversion of funds so obtained to the Nicaraguan Contras, say these experts, have set in motion a mechanism which it will be impossible for Reagan to stop and which will weaken him even more. It will doubtless not be Watergate all over again, they say, for Reagan is not the object of concentrated hatred as Nixon was. What we are going to witness will therefore not be a quick kill, but a steady erosion of power in Washington. Given Reagan's age and his increasingly pronounced penchant for messianism, that is not necessarily any better.

These experts may be overstating the crisis Reagan has to face in as much as many European leaders have little idea of the moralism — hypocritical or not, it makes no difference — governing public life in the United States and they completely underestimated the importance of Watergate when it broke out. Nonetheless, the fact remains that "Irangate" is at the centre of all conversations among European leaders today.

This was the case, for example, at the recent Anglo-French and Franco-Italian summits. However, it is felt that European concerns should be voiced only discreetly to prevent them backfiring on them and offering favouable opportunities to Soviet propaganda. British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher, greatly worried by the turn of events in Washington, emphasised this strongly in her recent conversations with President Mitterrand and Prime Minister Chirac, pointing out that one could "tell everything to the American President, provided one does so privately". That view is unquestionably shared by West German Chancellor Helmut Kohl, who opens up freely at private meetings but says little in public to avoid giving ammunition to the opposition.

Under the circumstances there is no question therefore of forming a sort of informal triumvirate — France, Britain and Federal Germany — that would be entrusted with the task of defending Europe's case for disarmament and security in Washington. As the chairman of the Western European Union meeting, Jean-Marie Caro, pointed out on Monday when he opened the discussions, spelling out a European view on defence and disarmament questions must not lead to "an otiose dispute with the United States", for "Europe will be no more capable of putting up a cohesive front against the United States than it will be of ensuring its own security without it."

Prime Minister Chirac, however, proposed going further and suggested that a kind of charter of European security be drawn up embodying the broad principles underpinning European defence — deterrence (with the help of French and British nuclear forces), coupling Europe and the United States (with the help of the American nuclear commitment to Europe), and the lowest possible level of disarmament provided conventional and chemical weapons are also taken into account. Chirac, whose speech had earlier been cleared by the Elysée, also emphasised the need for closer European coordination in arms manufacture, as Nato Secretary-General Lord Carrington also pointed out. The prime minister's office assures it was not a speech tailored for the occasion and points out that the "fear (generated in Reykjavik) can sometimes give good counsel."

The mood in Europe has of course not escaped Washington's notice. US Defence Secretary Caspar Weinberger, whom Reagan had excluded from the Reykjavik talks, is making the rounds of European capitals to explain his country's position on disarmament. Secretary of State George Shultz, who has distanced himself sharply from "Irangate", will doubtless also have to face similar questions when he goes to London and Brussels.

It is improbable that Weinberger's and Shultz's soothing words will be sufficient to reassure their questioners who, at any rate, want to know how Reagan is going to emerge from this crisis and who his new aides will be. However that may be, it is going to take a long time to repair the damage not only in East-West relations, but also in the anti-terrorist struggle.

Now that American weapons have been delivered to Iran — and even if these revelations came in handy for drawing attention away from Chirac's unfortunate remarks to the Washington Times and his refusal to condemn Syrian terrorism — it is clear that Western countries are incapable of developing a coordinated and consistent policy on the issue. Every new event goes to prove that national egoisms matter most and terrorism does after all pay. To realise how true this is, one has only to see the feigned concern shown by some European experts that the arms sales to Iran will cramp even more the US's ability to take action in the Arab world. (December 3)

Disinformation campaigns cater to public's thirst for 'inside knowledge'

By Jacques Decornoy

PROBES into cases of "disinformation" and revelations of "state secrets" are extremely popular in France just now, judging from the number of recently published books on such topics. What they all do is pander to the reading public's fondness for anything that smacks of inside information. True, this love of disclosure is only to be expected in view of the lies put out by governments or private business groups, their ill-disguised dirty tricks, their blatant manipulation of public opinion.

But it is equally obvious that if you go on talking about disinformation you end up not saying a word about the way the public is actually being informed. Surely the danger in constantly trying to unravel state secrets, or in trying to see reality solely in terms of such secrets, is that the plain, unvarnished truth may get forgotten.

Summing up the recent incident in which an American aircraft was shot down in Nicaragua and Eugene Hasenfus captured by government troops, Antony Lewis wrote in the International Herald Tribune: " 'This is an outrageous violation of international law,' Elliott Abrams, Assistant Secretary of State for Inter-American Affairs, said the other day. He was talking about the Nicaraguan government's temporary delay in allowing US consular access to Mr Hasenfus. That, from an administration that has violated international law wholesale in Nicaragua — and that ran away from the World Court adjudication of the issue. In its foolish shrillness, the remark is a telling indication of how American values and commonsense have been corrupted by the war on Nicaragua."

In just a few words, Lewis effectively demolished the official line by putting the facts in perspective: on the one hand, here was a consul who had been prevented for a few hours from visiting an agent who had been sent to attack the country in question; and on the other the United States had flouted the fundamental rules of international law. Unfortunately, such reminders of the facts are not as common as all that in the news media.

The primary form of disinformation is, surely, the work of people whose task is precisely to inform the public, and who all too often, whether intentionally or not, confuse superficialities with the essentials — and who are sometimes even unaware of what the essentials are. The many issues which were discussed, in the course of the debate over the so-called "new international information and communication order", even if the terms of that debate were on occasion ambiguous, cannot simply be dismissed with a stroke of the pen.

Comte Alexandre de Marenches, who ran the French secret service for 11 years, recently brought out his memoirs, written in collaboration with star journalist Christine Ockrent; the book, "Dans le Secret des Princes", has since become a bestseller (see Guardian Weekly of October 26).

In it, he constantly refers to Western democracies as being "soft", and argues that the American press behaved in an "irresponsible" manner during the Vietnam War by publishing "the so-called Pentagon papers". In so doing, he says, it "helped the enemy". Whose enemy? The enemy of the United States? Or of a major power caught up in an enterprise that was at once reckless and logical?

On August 14 of this year, President Ronald Reagan gave the go-ahead for a disinformation campaign aimed at destabilising the Libyan regime. Eleven days later, the administration planted the following story in the prestigious and austere Wall Street Journal: because Colonel Moamer Gadafy was planning bomb attacks, the possibility of another American strike against Libya could not be ruled out. The story was picked up by newspapers everywhere.

In early October, the Washington Post revealed details of how that attempt to mislead public opinion had been organised, thus causing great embarrassment to the White House and unfavourable comment in the American press.

Reagan then approved the setting up of a government bureau whose task would be to denounce Soviet efforts to disseminate inaccurate information about the United States. The fact that Reagan took that decision at that particular moment was, said the State Department, "pure coincidence".

Caught between the two fires of disinformation and counter-disinformation, the news media are the first to crack up: they seem incapable of covering topics like Libya in anything approaching a rational manner.

Marenches is right: our democracies are "soft", but perhaps not in the sense he meant it. They are "soft" because they allow themselves to be sapped from within by their refusal to see the world as it really is, and because they end up, under the pretext of wishing to find out more about themselves, producing a self-portrait that is a caricature of reality.

"Ethiopianisation plus Marxism equals the Soviet Union's conquest of Africa and therefore control of the world." This paranoid equation sums up fairly well a chapter from André Glucksmann and Thierry Wolton's new book, "Silence, on tue", an extract from which was carried in Paris-Match on October 17.

We read: "On September 12, 1985, in Revolution Square [in Addis Ababa], President Comrade Mengistu Haile Mariam celebrated the 11th anniversary of his coming to power [. . .] What did he talk about? Successes on the industrial front? In agriculture? In culture? In eradicating illiteracy? Of course not! He talked, yet again, about apartheid."

This piece of information is without any doubt a key element in Glucksmann and Wolton's argument: Ethiopia, which clearly has an imperial destiny, and which, on top of that, is now a Marxist state armed by the Soviet Union, has only one aim — to make South Africa (and therefore the whole of Africa) part of the totalitarian Communist bloc.

The information just quoted is quite specific, relayed by two well-known authors — published by the respectable house of Grasset. One can hardly expect Paris-Match readers to check such confident assertions point by point.

Now let us turn to the official report on Mengistu's speech of September 12, 1985, in the Ethiopian Herald of the following day. What does it say? A banner headline on the front page reads: "The secretary general calls on the masses to close ranks and throw their collective energies into development". On page six, three and a half columns are given over to a report on his speech: three of those columns deal with development and its political preconditions, and only 17 lines discuss South Africa (in perfect "traditional" language).

In the nine other pages of the paper, South Africa is referred to only once more, in a Reuters report. The rest is devoted to international issues, science and so on. As for the editorial, which naturally talks about the anniversary celebrations, it breathes not a word about South Africa.

If that is not disinformation I don't know what is. No matter: by hook or by crook, the authors have to bolster their theory that "control of the world hinges on Johannesburg". We have heard this kind of thing before, indeed ever since the West, wracked by its foreign adventures and domestic crises, got into the habit of putting the frights on itself.

"Control of Japan", "control of China", "control of the Pacific", "control of the tropical seas" and so on — these are familiar old refrains, just like those simplistic equations that have now been trotted out for nigh on a century: Japan plus white technology equals the end of the West; Japanese know-how plus the Chinese masses equals the Yellow peril; Red Russia plus Yellow China equals the death of civilisation as we know it. Now we have the Black-Red peril. Now Johannesburg has become the main goal of that "other dream" which "is beginning to take shape: that of Pan-African communism."

The alarm bells are ringing. The journalist Michel Droit, who will represent the Académie Française on the new National Commission for Communications and Liberties, the body that presides over the freedom of information in France, attacked the American Congress in Le Figaro on October 14 for what he called an irresponsible vote, and went on to discuss disinformation: "It is this kind of disinformation which has succeeded in convincing millions of men and women throughout the world that there is only one problem in South Africa: that of apartheid."

The same day, in its annual report, Amnesty International estimated that the number of South Africans arrested for political reasons in 1985 was 10,000. Since

Continued on page 14

No room for under-achievers in Singapore's brave new world

By Frank Nouchi

THE Prime Minister of Singapore, Lee Kwan Yew (he has held the post since 1966) must have been reading Aldous Huxley: the steps he has just taken to boost the birthrate selectively — by encouraging only university graduates, and no one else, to have more children — would seem to have been modelled on "Brave New World". Lee's legislation, which has no parallel anywhere else in the world, cannot be understood unless it is put in historical perspective.

It all began back in 1819, when Sir Stamford Raffles of the British East India Company landed on the island of Singapore. At the time, there was only a small village there, inhabited by 120 Malays and 30 Chinese. Following various waves of immigrants, the population later grew steadily to 53,000 by 1850 and 140,000 by 1881.

In 1883, steps were taken to impose a monthly quota on the number of immigrants, but the flow could not be stemmed. Between 1901 and 1911 Singapore's population grew by 35 per cent. From 1947 to 1957 it rose 4.3 per cent annually.

At that rate Singapore was fast approaching overpopulation. The Singapore Family Planning Association was set up in 1949 in the hope of reducing the birth rate. But the birth control campaign offered little incentive to parents to stop having children and was consequently ineffective.

So in 1966, one year after this tiny country of only about 600 square kilometres became independent, Lee Kwan Yew decided to get to grips with the problem by setting up a new body called the Singapore Family Planning and Population Board.

Family planning thus became the government's responsibility. Lee's aim to implement an effective birth control policy was soon achieved. The average number of children born to each woman, which had already slipped from 6.4 in 1947 to 4.6 by 1965, fell to 3.1 by 1970 and to only 1.6 by 1985.

More significantly, the growth reproductive rate — that is, the average number of girls born to each woman — dropped from 3.17 in 1947 to 0.76 by 1985. That figure is lower than the level required if population numbers are to remain constant (which is 1.025).

This spectacular fall in the number of births recorded among the three main ethnic groups (Chinese, Indian and Malay) could not have been achieved without an array of birth control measures, including the lifting of restrictions on abortion (which since 1974 is permitted in Singapore up until the 24th week). In 1970, the number of abortions was 4.1 per cent of the number of births. By 1985, that figure had soared to 55 per cent.

What is worrying the government now is that birth-control legislation has proved *too* successful. It had planned to reach a zero-rate of population growth not before the year 2030. The way things are going at the moment suggests that this will happen in only 20 years from now.

As one of those in charge of family planning in Singapore put it to me: "This trend is bound to create insuperable problems on both a demographic and a socio-economic level. As the population dwindles it will become proportionally older, which means in the long term that it will be impossible to continue our economic growth."

The government was aware of the dangers this could involve, and so decided to act. But the solution it adopted was unusual to say the least: it decided to bring about a selective increase in the birth rate by encouraging the socio-economic elite to have lots of children and the poor to get themselves sterilised.

A Singaporean woman with a university degree is on to a good thing: she is guaranteed a pay increase of 5 per cent when she has her first child, 10 per cent with her second and 15 per cent with her third.

But that is not all. She enjoys a whole range of welfare benefits: she can enter her child in the school of her choice and receives generous financial assistance to enable her to employ a home help or a nanny.

This is the first time a government has devised a eugenic policy aimed at regulating not only the number but also the quality of the population. At the same time, it has implemented a eugenic birth-control policy whose sole objective is to discourage the poorest and least educated sections of the population from having more than two children.

Here again the government's ploy is simple. It agrees to contribute $10,000 towards a couple's purchase of a home as long as the wife agrees to be sterilised, and on condition she meets certain criteria: she must be under 30 and be sterilised after the first or second child; she must not hold a university degree; and the family income must not exceed $1,500 a year.

If by any chance the woman were to have another child subsequently, she would have to repay the $10,000 in addition to a 10-per-cent annual interest rate on that sum.

The 2.5 million inhabitants of Singapore, a totally Westernised, soulless city, are constantly urged to strive for "excellence". Television propaganda repeatedly reminds viewers of the greatness of Renaissance Italy, of the geniuses it produced, and then immediately draws a parallel with Singapore's greatest achievements — namely Singapore Airlines, the new international airport, and the world's largest hotel, the Westin Stamford, designed by the celebrated architect Ieoh Ming Pei (responsible for the pyramid now being built in the Louvre).

Clearly a civilisation that relies so heavily on high IQs would be doomed if its population were to grow too old. The Straits Times leader writer recently called for swift action to stop the falling birth rate, arguing that the nation's only resources were people and that it was everyone's duty to help produce a population of the highest possible calibre.

Soon the old Chinese, Indian and Malay quarters will be no more than a memory as the city is swamped by cheap municipal housing and gleaming ultra-modern office blocks.

"We've improved our standards of health enormously," I was told by a senior civil servant. "Look at our infant mortality rate." It is true that it has plummeted from 41.4 deaths per 1,000 births in 1957 to 9.3 today. The same is true of the perinatal mortality rate, which has gone down from 28.2 deaths per 1,000 births in 1957 to 10.6 today.

But statistics are not everything. The gross national product per inhabitant may have gone up from $3,600 in 1973 to $11,000 in 1983. But not everyone is satisfied. As my taxi-driver said to me, half ironically, half desperately: "Singapore? Oh yes, it's a nice clean place. You get a $500 fine if you leave litter on the pavement. But poor people like me are treated like shit. The only break we get in life is sterilisation. So I'll be leaving for Australia for sure as soon as I get half a chance."

(November 13)

Quebec language backlash flares

By Bertrand de la Grange

Plans by Quebec Premier Robert Bourassa's Liberal government to bring bilingualism back, at least partly, into this French-Canadian province came under sharp attack over the weekend from Pierre-Marc Johnson, the leader of the Parti Québécois. The language dispute has flared up again following repeated infringements in recent months of the province's French Language Charter (Bill 101).

MONTREAL — "Hands off Bill 101!" The slogan is catching on in Quebec where growing numbers of ordinary citizens are beginning to hang large banners from their balconies condemning the provincial government's proposals to amend Bill 101 (French Language Charter) which in 1977 made French the province's sole official language.

There is a definite mobilisation against the restoration of bilingualism. Several prominent Quebecers with no government connections announced on November 29 the formation of a new organisation, Citoyens Français pour un Québec Français (CFQF — French Citizens for a French Quebec), which has added its weight to the nationalist activists of the Parti Québécois, the Société Saint-Jean-Baptiste, the Québec Français movement and the three big labour federations that have already gone on the offensive.

Referring to the influence of certain ministers in Robert Bourassa's government, Paul Trépanier, a former mayor of the small industrial city of Granby and president of CFQF, denounced what he described as "the short-sighted businessmen who seized control of Quebec" following the defeat of the (separatist) Party Québécois in the December 1985 general election. "There'll be a future for us," he said, "if we continue the struggle against cultural and economic invasion by English-speakers."

Bill 101, it was thought, had finally settled the language problem. In recent months Bourassa himself had said frequently: "The worst is over and the period of face-to-face confrontation has ended for the foreseeable future."

It took a protracted political battle, street demonstrations and even a few riots in the '60s to permit Quebec's French-speaking majority (over 80 per cent of the province's 6,500,000 population) to impose their language. With the arrival of the Parti Québécois in power in 1976, Quebec could at last give itself a "French face".

Bill 101 introduced French-language education for the children of immigrants, compelled businesses to utilise French corporate names and to gradually change over to French as their operating language.

Ten years later, some diehard English-speakers and also a few immigrants — especially Greeks — are urging the abolition of the law. Bourassa opened a real Pandora's box when in the course of his election campaign last year he promised to amend some of the language bill's articles to make them more acceptable to Quebec's English-speaking minority. The amnesty granted in favour of some 1,400 children of immigrants enrolled in English schools in breach of the law was the first crack in the consensus that appeared to have been forged over Bill 101. Indeed, the amnesty seems to be signalling to the adversaries of French that the law can be flouted with impunity.

At the same time, the Quebec education ministry announced its intention of examining the possibility for French-speaking children to learn English right from the first year of primary school. This is what is most worrying to the defenders of French who fear the mother-tongue being downgraded in favour of English.

What really sparked off the protests was the government's decision to submit to the provincial legislature a draft bill designed to amend the French Language Charter. The government announced that, for humanitarian reasons, it intended to strengthen the rights of English-speakers (already recognised by Bill 101) to institutions (hospitals, social services) offering services in their language.

Opponents of the proposed amendments fear that immigrants will take advantage of the opening to attend English-speaking institutions and therefore artificially bloat the minority's needs. Their fears seem quite justified in view of the attitude of certain ethnic groups which are openly flaunting their rejection of Bill 101 in other areas, such as commercial signboards.

When the Liberals were returned to office in Quebec, some merchants promptly brought back their English-language signboards which in some cases they had previously simply covered up temporarily. Others, including the French Méridien hotel chain which has an establishment in Montreal, followed suit. And in the last new months there has been a creeping erosion of French with English replacing it.

In one case at least — the big Zellers stores network, which is openly cocking a snook at the legislation — this has given rise to acts of violence with petrol bombs being hurled against the shop's windows. Instead of prosecuting the offending establishments, as the previous government did (92 firms were fined in 1985 compared with barely 15 or so this year), Bourassa decided early this year to suspend legal action on grounds that the courts were expected to rule before the end of the year whether Bill 101's provisions regarding signboards were constitutional.

For the Parti Québécois, still reeling from its stinging election defeat, the language controversy offers a unique opportunity for rallying its activists and appealing to the solidarity of all French-speakers to defend the party's "finest achievement".

When Bourassa was asked to clarify his intentions, he declared there was no question of going back on Bill 101. It was merely a question, he said, of "reconciling the priority of French in Quebec with another priority — the equality of citizens." Which is why he says he would like to mark out "bilingual districts" where signboarding would be permitted in both languages.

He has yet to convince the members of his own Liberal Party who are split on the issue.

(December 8)

'Only the State could create an Orsay'

ALTHOUGH there are very few Fauves at the Musée d'Orsay, one could well imagine Michel Laclotte (chief curator of paintings at the Louvre, who has also become chief curator at the new museum) elegantly belted into a safari suit. For eight years he had been tracking down and flushing out from their hiding places and bagging hundreds of canvases, sculptures, pieces of furniture and objets d'art through purchases, exchanges, barter arangements and borrowings. His glorious trophies, at long last rounded up, are now hung, posed and displayed for viewing. The chief curator has legitimate grounds for satisfaction.

France's most magnificent railway station, Victor Lalou's Gare d'Orsay, set in a prime location in the heart of Paris overlooking the Seine, was inaugurated on July 14 (Bastille Day), 1900. But 39 years later, the big main-line train services were routed away from it, turning it into a commuter station and earmarking it eventually for the wrecker's ball. Oddly enough it was the vast public uproar caused by the Pompidou government's unshakable determination to tear down Les Halles, the work of another architect, Victor Baltard, that saved the Gare d'Orsay from being sacrificed in the name of modernity.

President Georges Pompidou, who had already undertaken the project that was to carry his name (the Centre Georges Pompidou), decided that the Gare d'Orsay should be turned into a museum of the 19th century. After much anguish, it was decided that the new museum should include art and architecture of the period between 1848 and 1914.

As the space necessary for such a huge collection far exceeded the 30,000 square metres area available in the Laloux construction, it was evident a new structure had to be built inside the old railway station, and that it would have to scrupulously respect the original architecture. It was a tall order and the job was turned over to a woman — 59-year-old Italian-born Gae Aulenti.

And the result is what Time Magazine's Robert Hughes describes as "the world's best museum of its kind . . . the museum is exemplary. It shows what State patronage can do. Nothing that private patronage could summon up, in or out of France, could possibly rival it."

Having come over from the nearby Louvre's department of painting which he agreed to quit only on the specific condition that he be allowed to return to his original job as soon as the Musée d'Orsay opened, he is now getting ready to return across the Seine to his "beloved Italian primitives", leaving the weaning in the hands of its young mother, director Françoise Cachin (who comes from the Centre Georges Pompidou at Beaubourg).

He says, however, that he had always been keenly interested in the Orsay project, even before the final choice of the building was made . . . Once the choice was made, the key question was, what were the Orsay collections to be? Initially, they would obviously be transfers from the Louvre, the Jeu de Paume, what was left of the Musée d'Art Moderne at the Palais de Tokyo and which was not earmarked for the Centre Pompidou, and everything else that could be salvaged from the Luxembourg's old collection, which was founded by Louis XVIII in 1819 as a museum of living artists.

"In the first half of the century," says Laclotte, "this is precisely what happened at the Luxembourg. They bought works by Delacroix and Ingres, but towards 1860 things began to go bad. Just think: they had only four Corots, bought quite belatedly, and a single Millet. Crazy. Then beginning in 1920 the works began to get scattered. The Luxembourg collection was bursting at the seams, canvases were rolled up, bundled and packed off to the provinces and were lost. The Museum of Modern Art was hurriedly installed in 1937-1938 at the Palais de Tokyo. It was a shambles."

Once the inventories were drawn up and a start made in "recovering" works, the team at the Orsay, which was still nothing but a huge worksite, simultaneously launched into a policy of purchasing acquisitions. "It wasn't easy to convince the people I worked with," admits Laclotte. The chief curators of some 30 national museums in France met monthly to approve or reject — by secret vote — the acquisition proposals made by each of them. It is easy to imagine, for example, Laclotte's idea of acquiring items of furniture by Henry Clemens Van de Velde, a key art nouveau figure, being regarded as scatter-brained by these eminent curators who had only Charles Cressent chests of drawers in their museums. One of them even sighed one day: "Laclotte, you'll get us to buy a Frigidaire."

Laclotte did not buy a Frigidaire, but he got his Van de Veldes at a sale in Monte Carlo just three weeks ago; a rare Klimt from a Swiss art dealer; Monet's "La Pie" from a bequest, and Jean-Baptiste Isabey's "La Tentation de Sainte Antoine" at the Puces (flea market). His obstinacy was crowned by the acquisition of Paul Sérusier's highly symbolic "Le Talisman".

That picture was painted in October 1888 under Gauguin's instruction at Pont-Aven. "At the time," says Laclotte, "Gauguin was dressed up as a sort of Breton, and pretty insufferable. He was going to Arles to meet Van Gogh, and he had a whole crowd of young painters around him, among them Sérusier. Gauguin asked him: "How do you see that landscape? You see it in red or blue? So, put red and blue.' Sérusier went back to Paris to show it to his pals, Bonnard, Vuillard . . . And that is how this small painting became the talisman of the new painting. Sérusier gave it to Maurice Denis. We bought it from one of his sons."

However, in spite of all the laudable efforts it has made, the Orsay museum has yet to acquire a canvas by the great Norwegian painter Edvard Munch. "I tried everything," says Laclotte, "I've been to Oslo several times, and I even wooed Elf Aquitaine which was boring for oil over there. Perhaps the French oil firm would sponsor a purchase . . ." As a matter of fact, a Munch fetches in the neighbourhood of thirty to forty million francs (£3 to £4 million).

Talking of sponsors, at least one must be mentioned — Michel David-Weill, who has permitted the museum to acquire Daumier's

By Danièle Heymann

parliamentary series and a complete roomful of works by the Scottish archictect and designer Charles Rennie Mackintosh.

Fernand Cormon's "La Fuite de Caïn" ("Cain Flying before Jehovah's Curse"), a gigantic and disturbing melee of rosy flesh which was thought to have been lost forever, was happily discovered rolled up and put away in a storeroom at the Musée d'Art Moderne.

Spite, just spite, cried Laclotte at the suggestion that exchanges might be a good way of getting rid of one's "daubs". And he offered proof. "Some returns were easy to get when the works were not on display. This was true in the case of Antoine Gros's "Histoire d'eau" which hadn't been taken out of its box since it reached the Narbonne museum in 1959, or Albert Gleize's "Femmes Gauloises", which the Autun museum found very unwieldly, being 4.24 metres high by 6.51 metres wide."

But to get "La Mort de la Réligieuse" by Pils, the gentleman to whom we owe the celebrated "Rouget de Lisle chantant la Marseillaise pour la premiere fois chez Dietrich", the Orsay gave a Manet in exchange. The Lyons museum surrendered Rodin's "La Grand Homme qui marche" in exchange for a Cézanne and a Pissarro. Dieppe museum gave up its "Portrait de la famille Thaulow" by Blanche in return for Renoir's "Portrait de Mme Paul Bérard".

But the finest story concerning a swap is undoubtedly the one about Lhermitte's "La Paye de moissoinneurs". "This celebrated work from the Luxembourg was sent in the '20s to Château-Thierry, the painter's home-town, where it hung in the mayor's office where marriages took place. And the mayor, André Rossi, turned a deaf ear to all our entreaties — 'La Paye des moissoinneurs' was a picture linked to the life of the place and it would stay there."

Orsay, says Laclotte, proposed "superb consolation prizes". "Nothing doing. The mayor finally relented when the Musée d'Art Moderne agreed to loan two Lurçat pictures to Château-Thierry. And we capped it with an offer of another Lhermitte painting of a fable by La Fontaine, who was also born at Château-Thierry. Wonderful, but for one small detail. The painting in question was "La Mort et le Bûcheron", showing a corpse and a yokel. Can your see that in a wedding room? Not to mention the fact that the canvas did not come from the Luxembourg collection, but had been left at the Amiens museum, to which a Corot had to be offered in compensation!"

In other cases, they were mostly salvage operations primarily concerning sculptures. For example, the great allegorical groups decorating the façade of the former Trocadéro Palace were discovered when motorway excavation work was being done at a disused foundry just outside Nantes. The local municipal authorities would appear to have shown some bad faith by quickly putting two of the recovered groups at the local trade court so as not to have to send them to Paris. But things were sorted out, and Orsay magnanimously gave a Sisley in exchange "out of kindness".



Drawing by Plantu

Musée d'Orsay, 1 Rue de Bellechasse, Paris 7. Open Tuesday to Saturday from 10:30 am to 6 pm every day, except Thursday when it stays open until 9.45 pm, and Sunday when it is open from 9 am to 6 pm. Entrance fee: F20.

The museum also offers an annual pass for F250 which entitles the holder to a subscription to the twice-monthly Les Nouvelles du Musée d'Orsay.

Guided tours every day at 11 am (not Sunday), except Thursday when they are at 7 pm.

Restaurant with a fine view of the Tuileries.

Disinformation campaigns

Continued from page 12

June 12, 1986, when the state of emergency was proclaimed, 20,000 have been jailed. Writing in the International Herald Tribune on October 15, the local correspondent of the Washington Post quoted extensively from a report put out by the Black Sash organisation on torture inflicted on young people aged between 12 and 18 which is likely to leave them permanently handicapped.

Reports of this kind, which, we are told, overlook the dangers of "Ethiopianisation" and make no mention of the "major reforms" being implemented by President Pieter Botha, forget the most important thing of all — Western interests.

And what ingratitude too! Their authors fail to mention the solicitude shown for us by (white) South Africans. This has not, however, escaped the attention of Jean Ferré, who writes on radio for the rightwing Figaro-Magazine. He urged us, in his October 11 column, to listen regularly to the broadcasts in French by South African Radio, and to "compare its news bulletins with those put out by Radio-France Internationale."

The same issue contained a lavish photo-feature on Namibia: "Fabulous Namibia: sand, sun and silence." That is about all it said about that "autonomous territory", apart from praising the quality of its lobsters, mentioning that anyone wishing to visit it will need a visa from the South African authorities, pointing out that "many ethnic groups now share Namibia", and putting a word in for the 200,000-strong seal colony at Cape Cross. The "silence" of Namibia? One can only suppose that the landmines and the military helicopters are equipped with silencers.

And then there is Jonas Savimbi, who with Reagan and Botha's backing, leads the UNITA rebels in neighbouring Angola. In Alexandre de Marenches' view, he is one of this century's greats, an anti-colonialist resistance hero, a latter-day Charles de Gaulle, an intellectual and moral giant. Marenches' admiration is unbounded and he is particularly impressed by Savimbi's command of French.

Pierre Péan writes, in his recent book "Secret d'Etat": "In a world with paranoid tendencies, press freedom is seen as a handicap: any type of news that is believed to weaken the nation is perceived as aggression against the Western camp. The human rights campaign, the fight against racism, support for those seeking independence, pacifism, and environmentalism are all regarded as potentially dangerous causes, because they are supported or initiated by the KGB in an attempt to weaken our democracies. This simplistic view, which sees everything in terms of East-West conflict, has led the secret services elsewhere to defend South Africa and to see the anti-apartheid campaign purely as a Russian disinformation manoeuvre."

It is regrettable that secret services have adopted this view. Their action is certainly facilitated by an abundance of unpaid "informers" who tell them what they want to hear.

In fact the brainwashing campaign now being organised by those whose jobs should be to inform has only just begun. This we are told by Louis Pauwels himself, editor of Figaro-Magazine, who, in a recent article called "How, quite simply, to have done with the French Revolution", wrote: "We are continuing, with our own brooms, the great spring-clean undertaken by the intellectuals of the 80s."

Alexandres de Marenches need have no fear: if our democracies are too "soft" there will be plenty of hard men to beef them up.

(Le Monde Diplomatique, November issue)



The Washington Post

O'Neill Believes Reagan Knew Of Contra Funding

By Washington Post Reporters

WASHINGTON — President Reagan acknowledged Saturday for the first time that "mistakes were made" in the clandestine scheme to sell arms to Iran and divert funds to the Nicaraguan rebels and vowed to "set things right."

Retiring House Speaker Thomas P. "Tip" O'Neill Jr., D-Mass., replied by describing the secret Iran arms shipments as a "terrible decision," and, in a separate interview, said it is his opinion that Reagan knew about the possibly illegal diversion of profits from the arms sales to Nicaraguan rebels.

In his weekly radio address, Reagan defended his policy of attempting to reach out to "responsible moderates" in Iran, while saying "it's obvious that the execution of these policies was flawed and mistakes were made." In choosing these words, Reagan borrowed from a speech last week by Vice President Bush. Reagan stopped short of admitting that he — or any specific person in the administration — had made [illegible]

Striking a concilliatory tone in his remarks from Camp David, Md., Reagan said: "Let me just say it was not my intent to do business with Khomeini, to trade weapons for hostages, nor to undercut our policy of anti-terrorism. And let me say again, I know the stories of the last few weeks have been distressing. I'm deeply disappointed this initiative has resulted in such a controversy, and I regret it has caused such concern and consternation. But I pledge to you, I will set things right. That's what I am doing now."

Reagan has repeatedly denied knowing of the diversion of $10 million to $30 million through a Swiss bank account to the Nicaraguan rebels. But O'Neill, in an interview with Hyman H. Bookbinder, former Washington representitive of the American Jewish Committee, published in the newspaper Washington Jewish Week, said: "My personal opinion is, I honestly believe the president knew. I think this is probably one judgement the president made on his own. And the judgement was wrong."

Asked if he meant to say that Reagan was not telling the truth, the speaker said, "I've talked to generals since this thing has happened, I've talked to colonels, lieutenant colonels, and to each one of them I say, 'Can you conceive of Lt. Col. (Oliver L.) North accomplishing this by himself?' They laugh. They say . . . no lieutenant colonel would ever have done that on his own. He had to have the authority from somebody up higher than himself."

O'Neill said the information also went higher than Reagan's departed national security adviser, Vice Adm. John M. Poindexter. "They had to run it by someone higher up in the White House," he said.

Earlier Mr Reagan had said the Iran arms-contra funds scandal should not become an excuse for cutting off U.S. aid. "We cannot let recent events distract us from the cause of those brave freedom fighters around the world," Reagan said in a speech to a group of women entrepreneurs. "Nothing that's happened makes those causes less just or less important for what we fight for."

In testimony to the Senate Intelligence Committee, former national security adviser Robert C. McFarlane has offered a description of President Reagan's role in a 1985 Israeli shipment of U.S. arms to Iran that differs from an explanation given on November 25 by Attorney General Edwin Meese III, according to McFarlane's associates and congressional sources.

In an August 1985 White House meeting, McFarlane reportedly said, Reagan approved arms shipments "if that's what it takes" to demonstrate the United States' good-faith interest in improving relations with Iran. Meese, however, said last month of the Israeli shipment of U.S. arms to Iran in September 1985: "Our information is that the president knew about it probably after the fact and agreed with the general concept of continuing our discussions with the Israelis concerning these matters."

Earlier, however, both White House chief of staff Donald T. Regan and former national security adviser John M. Poindexter had told reporters the president gave advance approval to the arms shipment, which was made [illegible] the opening gambit of what became a yearlong effort to win the release of American hostages in Lebanon and establish new ties with factions of the Iranian government.

A written White House chronicle of the Iranian-arms operation, used last month to brief Congress and last week to refute charges that President Reagan had early knowledge of the arms shipments, was in fact compiled by the central figure in the scandal, Col. North, and omits significant details of the program, according to officials quoted by the Los Angeles Times. The White House apparently ordered North to prepare the account early last month, before he was linked to a secret cash-skimming operation that sent profits from the arms sales to contra forces in Nicaragua. That cash-skimming scheme is not mentioned in the purportedly beginning-to-end account of the Iranian dealings.

There is no evidence that top administration officials told North to prepare a deliberately misleading chronicle of the Iran events.

Congressional investigators have traced profits from the covert sale of U.S. arms to Iran to a Swiss bank account managed by the Central Intelligence Agency, into which the U.S. and Saudi governments also deposited $250 million each to underwrite rebels fighting Soviet troops in Afghanistan. Money from the account also was used to buy arms to U.S.-backed contra rebels fighting the government in Nicaragua, informed sources said, at a time when Congress had forbidden any military support for the contras.

State Department officials and U.S. ambassadors have solicited several foreign governments over the past two years for contributions of humanitarian aid to the contras fighting the government of Nicaragua, informed sources said Saturday. The sources could not say how many countries made contributions or whether they all were told to deposit their donations in a Swiss bank account.

The officials confirmed a Los Angeles Times story, published Saturday in The Washington Post, that the wealthy ruler of the tiny, oil-rich kingdom of Brunei had contributed several million dollars to the contra cause after being asked by a U.S. diplomat. The sources said that Secretary of State George P. Shultz, though aware of the contribution, did not solicit it personally although he paid an unusual three-hour visit to Brunei on June 24.

They also confirmed that Brunei's Sultan Muda Hassanal Bolkiah was told to send his donation not directly to the Nicaraguan rebel leaders but to a Swiss bank account, whose number was supplied to him by U.S. officials. The Times story said the Swiss account was controlled by Col. North.

The United States and Israel provided Iran with $500 million to $1 billion worth of arms over the past two years and improved the Iranian military capability "very substantially", the Carter administration's top Iran specialist has said. Calling this a "reasonable estimate" based on press reports and his own calculations, Gary Sick, now a Ford Foundation program officer, told an American [illegible] audience he believed a total of 5,000 to 5,500 tons of military equipment, including nine to 12 shipments from Israel, had gone to Iran and that "much of it" came from the United States.

Sick said the deliveries had "made a difference" in the balance of forces between warring Iran and Iraq and would give Tehran "an edge" in its next offensive But it was "not at all clear it will make a decisive difference," he added.

More damaging, Sick said, was the "psychological effect" of U.S. arms going to Iran, giving the impression that one superpower had changed sides in the war in expectation of an Iranian victory. This, he said, could encourage other Western countries to provide more arms to Iran, thus providing "a new impetus" to forces seeking "to dump" Iraqi President Saddam Hussein.

The Reagan administration would now have to consider "very seriously" whether to provide Iraq with some military assistance to compensate for its delivery of arms to Iran and to re-establish its "even-handed" policy in the Iran-Iraq war, Sick said. He added that this was "an unlikely prospect".

Sick said he found the administration's statement that the value of U.S. arms shipped to Iran was $12 million to be "a very low estimate". The ex-official suggested that this was "not a chance number", noting that laws require the administration to report any sales of $14 million or more to Congress for its approval.

Sick, National Security Council deputy in charge of Iran during the Carter administration, had responsibility for dealing with the 1979-81 crisis over the 52 American hostages held in Tehran.

President [illegible] apparent arms-for-hostages deals with Iran have outraged U.S. diplomats overseas and prompted an unusual protest from their Washington-based union, according to U.S. envoys in Geneva. After receiving cabled protests from members there and in numerous foreign posts, the American Foreign Service Association (AFSA) sent an open cable on State Department wires to all U.S. diplomatic missions abroad protesting the apparent shift in longstanding U.S. policy toward terrorism. The association sided with Secretary of State Shultz's public reservations about the sending of arms to Iran.

"We find it very disturbing that our government would take actions that might lead terrorists to conclude that taking American hostages would advance their cause," the cable signed by AFSA president Gerald Lamberty said. AFSA is the professional organization of the Foreign Service and the official representative of Foreign Service employees. The AFSA statement argued that unless the administration moves quickly "to re-establish the credibility of our policy of not negotiating for hostages, . . . thousands of foreign personnel throughout the world are in greatly increased danger."

Soviets Keeping To SALT

By Gary Lee

MOSCOW — The Soviet government said last week that it will not exceed the limits on nuclear weapons established under the SALT II treaty, signed by both countries in 1979 but never ratified by the U.S. Congress.

"The Soviet side believes that there is still an opportunity for stopping the dangerous [illegible] events that is provoked by the irresponsible actions of the present administration," the government said.

The statement was in reaction to the U.S. deployment on Nov. 28 of its 131st U.S. strategic bomber equipped with cruise missiles, which brought the number of U.S strategic nuclear weapons delivery systems above the limits agreed.

"Taking into account the immense universal importance of the issue," the statement said, "and the need to preserve the key constraint on the strategic arms race, the U.S.S.R. refrains for the time being from abandoning the limitations under SALT I and SALT II."

In announcing that it will adhere to the arms pacts "for the time being," Moscow also reiterated its position of last May that the U.S. decision "gives the Soviet Union all grounds to regard itself free from its commitments" under SALT II.

It's Down To The President

Philip Geyelin

IN their zeal to mend the errors of the Reagan administration, congressional Democrats (and some Republicans) are barking up the wrong tree: For all the loose talk of new laws, there is no legislative quick fix for the way presidents use or abuse the White House foreign policy-making apparatus.

To argue otherwise is to miss a critical point about how U.S. policy on hostages, on the Gulf war, and on the "contras" was allowed to lurch so sickeningly out of control. It was not because the system did not work. It was because the system works the way a president wants, or allows, it to work, no better, no worse. From this flows a hard truth that Reagan supporters have been slow to confront: The problem is the president.

The would-be fixers in Congress are looking at the record of the past six years, as well as at the current scandal, the gross mismanagement, the collapse of credibility.

Small wonder the impulse to look for a legislative remedy is powerful, the more so when you weigh the odds of Mr. Reagan's mending his own way of governing by remote control.

The introduction of Frank Carlucci as his new national security adviser offers a ray of hope. Mr. Carlucci is a sensible, savvy professional. But much more is needed: the dispatching of Donald Regan, for starters; a license for Mr. Carlucci to house-clean the National Security Council; a readiness to knock heads if necessary to resolve interagency guerrilla warfare over policy.

Ronald Reagan may be able to do his own fixing of the decision-making procedures. If not, so be it. Congress cannot do it for him.

The reasons range from constitutional prerogatives to simple practicalities. All were thoroughly illuminated in 1980 when Senator Edward Zorinsky of Nebraska had a whack at trying to bring the White House national-security machinery under tighter congressional supervision.

Mr. Zorinsky's scheme was to make the president's national security adviser subject to confirmation by the Senate and cross-examination by the House. His target was Zbigniew Brzezinski: Mr. Zorinsky and others thought Mr. Brzezinski has gotten too involved in making policy, and wanted to cut him down to size.

The proposal, even before being knocked out in a Senate-House conference committee, had been effectively shot down by witnesses at earlier Senate hearings. Even if Congress created a national security adviser by statute, it was pointed out, the president would be under no obligation to fill the post. Or he would fill it with a minor figure and rely on a predominant adviser of his own choice. The Congress cannot pick the president's most intimate advisers.

Attempts to circumscribe presidential decision-making by overhauling the National Security Council system would be equally pointless. The council is a statutory body created by the 1947 National Security Act; it consists of the president, the vice president, the secretaries of state and defense, with the director of Central Intelligence and the chairman of the joint chiefs as advisory members.

A president can use the NSC or ignore it; he can summon its members singly or in any combination. He can widen the circle, depending on the question at hand.

As Dean Rusk put it in response to the Zorinsky proposal, "A president is entitled to seek and get advice from any source whatsoever, including his chauffeur."

There is plenty that Congress can do in the present affair. It can investigate. It can use its control of the purse to limit what a president can do in the name of national security. But whatever hope there may be for reforming the decision-making process — or improving the quality and the conduct of the policy it produces — rests ultimately with the President.

The Washington Post

Openness First

IT WAS GOOD to hear President Reagan speaking more forthrightly about the Iranian arms foul-up and acknowledging the public unhappiness with the policy gone wrong. Still, it was disconcerting to hear from the president, earlier in the week, a little lecture on the historical, procedural and constitutional correctness of it all. He should be out there insisting that the full truth emerge, and emerge promptly. No doubt it is inaccurate and certainly it is unfair at this point to suspect that Mr. Reagan, by his show of solicitude for his former aides' Fifth Amendment rights and for the protocol of an independent counsel, means to slow the Iran-contra inquiry or to divert it from a policy review into a necessarily narrower search for violations of law. Yet that is the impression many have got.

What is, after all, the essence of this affair? Perhaps laws regarding arms and money have been bent or broken. If this is so, however, it happened in the course of the administration's conduct of foreign policy, and it must be the primary concern now to get at what went wrong with the policy and to set it straight: to learn from the episode, to enforce political accountability and, within these limitations, to make the administration as seaworthy as possible for the rest of its voyage. It can only be a secondary concern to punish particular individuals for offenses committed — to punish them, that is, beyond the results attendant upon loss of their high position. This order of priorities must guide the sorting out of the issues of inquiry.

The administration, in its upper policy reaches, has put on a face of openness but is still not telling all it knows. Far from it. This is a mistake, and as a result the press is in hot pursuit, and Congress is finding there is a great deal left for it to look into — so much so that some of the administration's closest friends wonder whether it is not falling dangerously behind the curve of public demand for the complete, unvarnished truth. The other day, for instance, Robert McFarlane [illegible] that Mr. Reagan had approved in advance Israel's shipment of arms to Iran in September ... say that the dispute on this important point has now been put to rest. But its lesson is that as long as the administration shrinks from a candid accounting, it will remain vulnerable to buffeting by the testimony, reporting and leaks of others.

Congress will likely set up select House and Senate committees promptly in the new session. They should explore ways to work together. Limited immunity should be granted as necessary to get the story out. Where frictions arise between the openness of a congressional inquiry and the discretion of a court-appointed independent counsel, as one comes to be appointed, openness must come first.

Carlucci Looks To Be The Right Man For The Job

FRANK CARLUCCI knows his way around the neighborhood. He has had his successes and misadventures in all the principal agencies of government whose work the president's national security adviser is meant to coordinate. "Coordinate" is a key word here, suggesting, as it does, a rather modest mandate. The job to which Mr. Carlucci was named by the president has ballooned in importance over the years but without a corresponding growth of accountability. It has fitfully generated delusions of grandeur, conspiracies and bureaucratic gridlock, none of which was in the original plan. Sometimes it has become the seat of an alternative secretary of state, sort of like the time when you had a pope and an anti-pope. Reams of political science, most of it terminally boring, have been written about what the proper function of this White House office should be. It should be to help the president dig out from under the rock slide of advice he is getting from his Cabinet departments on national security affairs, to understand their dispute and monitor their actions and, above all, to understand his own choices.

Probably the office has gotten too big. At least that's what people say who think it has begun to regard itself as a Cabinet department of its own. For a time it was adulated on precisely the opposite ground: i.e., that it was small and secret enough to be a locus of some action and energy in a government of gluey, protocol-bound bureaucracy, Presidents have habitually been tempted by its protected status (outside the reach of congressional inquiry) to use it to get things done quickly, decisively and without a lot of foot-dragging from the Foreign Service or the military hierarchy. Just as habitually this instinct has come to grief. Mr. Reagan shouldn't need any schooling in that these days, and neither, we suspect, does Mr. Carlucci.

Mr. Carlucci, savvy and well-schooled in the substantive issues a national security adviser must deal with, has experience as well in dealing with the men who are President Reagan's principal foreign policy and defense advisers. Presumably he was acceptable to them; but that does not mean he is of some junior or servile status. We would guess that he comes as close as anyone could to being the right choice in that he (a) would not aspire to being a substitute Cabinet officer himself but (b) is also a man of some self-confidence and standing who would not gladly let himself or a president get shoved around. We hope the new appointment works. We also hope that Mr. Carlucci has arranged to report directly to the president.



The Maverick Marines

By Jim Hoagland

BERLIN — Inevitably, Robert McFarlane and Oliver North fade into one-dimensional symbols as revelation tumbles after revelation in the damaging scandal now gripping Washington. Rambo to some, incompetent and perhaps evil bunglers to many more, the ... have become blank screens onto which we all project our feelings about six years of Ronald Reagan's leadership.

Newspapers that failed to describe McFarlane's evident limitations when he was a powerful figure in the White House now have removed hands from eyes, ears and mouth. In disgrace, North remains as mysterious and cartoon-like as he was when riding high and covert.

But the investigators now probing the wreckage of the administration's antiterrorist policy will need to look closely at the complex human emotions of these two professional marines and the intense pressures that took them to the Tehran Hilton, shepherding arms to Iran's ayatollahs.

They will find that the trail to Tehran stretches back to the bombing of the U.S. Marine barracks in Beirut in 1983 and the searing impact that it had on McFarlane, North and the ex-Marine Secretary of State George P. Shultz. It was this act of terrorism, it appears, that locked Reagan's National Security Council staff on the unwise course of running secret operations in the Middle East outside all other controls.

The massacre of 241 young Americans in poorly defended positions at the Beirut airport on Oct. 23, 1983, has thus come back to haunt the administration, which seemed destined to outdistance its political negligence in this tragedy.

It is easy to imagine McFarlane, North and Shultz consumed by anguish and some guilt over having put their fellow Marines in harm's way for political aims that were so ephemeral that the president was shortly to abandon them. It is even easier to understand them vowing to find and to punish the Islamic fanatics who engineered the attack.

McFarlane and North took charge of a secret high-level inquiry to find out who had organized the bombing and how they could be made to pay. The answers coming back directly to the NSC through Marine trainers working with the Lebanese Deuxieme Bureau, or military intelligence, all pointed to Sheik Mohammed Hussein Fadlallah and his immediate followers in the Hezbollah organization.

On March 8, 1985, a group of Lebanese Baha'is, recruited by the Deuxieme Bureau to avenge both the Marines and their coreligionists being persecuted in Iran, set off a car bomb that missed killing Fadlallah but killed more than 80 others. Many of the Baha'is involved in the operation were later captured and executed by Hezbollah forces, according to an intelligence source with wide contacts in the Middle East.

It was about this time that North's name surfaced in intelligence circles in Beirut as running covert operations on his own, outside the CIA's control and its channels there. The suspicion was that the attack on Fadlallah may have been one of those operations, although sources in Washington told The Washington Post in May 1985 that it was the CIA that originally put the Deuxieme Bureau on Fadlallah's trail.

North is said to have run later operations directed against the Syrians with the help of aides to Samir Geagea, a Maronite Christian militia leader.

While the Marines were not avenged, a pattern was established of McFarlane and North "going operational" out of the NSC on ... missions in the Middle East and abrogating to the ... staff high-level policy decisions on terrorism.

Antiterrorism became the only policy the administration pursued with vigor in the Middle East. Much of what McFarlane and North did in the Middle East was apparently discussed with Shultz but never passed down to any other level at State.

It is known now that Shultz turned off efforts within State to plan a more modest, more pragmatic effort to establish political contacts with Iran while the McFarlane-North secret contacts were being planned and carried out.

Operating from misplaced confidence that he could do in Iran what Henry Kissinger had done in China, McFarlane sought control of Iranian policy from the first days of the administration.

North's apparent decision to go for a truce with the Iranian-backed terrorists who had been stalking Americans abroad (underwritten by the arms shipments) was a horrible misjudgment that has not run its course. For it is almost certain that the two most recent kidnappings of Americans in Beirut were ordered by a radical faction in Iran that wanted the new hostage-takings to abort the secret U.S.-Iran contacts.

(Jim Hoagland is associate editor and chief foreign correspondent of The Washington Post.)

Pretoria's Figures On Child Detainees

By William Claiborne

JOHANNESBURG, South Africa — The South African government said Sunday it is holding 256 children under the age of 16 for alleged security offenses, the youngest only 11 and 115 of the rest between the ages of 12 and 14. The official figures — the first released by the government since the imposition of a state of emergency on June 12 — fall far below those compiled by anti-apartheid monitoring groups campaigning against such arrests.

Last month, the Detainees' Parents Support Committee, in launching a "free the children" campaign, estimated that during the past five months, 8,800 children under the age of 18 have been detained. There also have been allegations that some have been physically abused and tortured while in prison.

It was the first time the government has openly addressed the issue of children being held in prison without charges under the state of emergency. Adriaane Vlok, minister of law and order, said he was "deeply concerned and saddened" by the detentions and pledged that no child would be held for longer than is "absolutely necessary."

"However," he said, "law-abiding people have the right to be protected against the disruption of their daily lives, violence and intimidation. The government has no option but to act against any person, regardless of race, creed, sex or age, who places the safety of others in jeopardy. I am saddened by the fact that children are being manipulated by callous individuals and radical organizations (that) want to make the country ungovernable through brutal methods."

The government did not disclose for what alleged offenses the children are being held. Under the emergency decree and other internal security acts, they may be held indefinitely without charge for the purposes of interrogation or to maintain public order.

Spokesmen for anti-apartheid monitoring groups have said that while children in the black townships frequently may be drawn into clashes with security forces, many have been arrested in security sweeps carried out on the basis of police intelligence reports.

The figures on detained children were released by Maj. Gen. Johan Coetzee, the commissioner of police, who stressed that procedures governing the detention of "any indiividual" are applied in the cases of children to protect their rights. Coetzee gave the following breakdown on children held: 1 age 11; 6 age 12; 21 age 13; 88 age 14; 140 age 15.

In response to charges by the parents' committee that juveniles have "disappeared" in the custody of security forces, Coetzee said that standing instructions to police require that parents must be advised immediately of such detentions. "Some children, unfortunately, supplied the security forces with incorrect information regarding their names and addresses. This, understandably, makes it extremely difficult for the security forces to notify their next of kin," he said.


Colonel Oliver North and daughters.

Real-life Rambo In The White House Basement

By David Ignatius

LT. COL. OLIVER L. NORTH told an acquaintance in early 1985 that he knew his secret efforts to maintain funding for the Nicaraguan contras might ruin his career in the Marine Corps. But he was prepared to accept the consequences, North said, because he believed it would be morally wrong to abandon the contras in their time of need. Then, as now, North was operating close to the edge of illegality.

North told an acquaintance last year that he had confided to only one person —his boss at the time, national security adviser Robert C. McFarlane — details of his fund-raising effort for the counterrevolutionaries, or contras, which at that point mainly involved introducing rebel leaders to private contributors in the U.S. and abroad. North's remarks last year help explain the personality of the man who is at the center of the Reagan administration's greatest political crisis. They show a man who is intensely loyal to his friends and allies, a moralistic military officer who often tends to dramatize his role in events, a man with a passionate sense of mission who, in his zealousness, long ago crossed the border into questionable conduct. "Ollie knew he had sacrificed his career a long time ago," said one of his close friends, a former Pentagon official.

According to Attorney General Edwin Meese III, North was involved in a scheme to divert profits from a secret Iranian arms deal he had helped arrange, launder this money through a Swiss bank account and use it to aid the contras in Central America. North's friends generally refuse to comment on the Iran connection, but none seems surprised by it. North is at the center of a Justice Department criminal investigation and several congressional investigations focusing on potential violations of U.S. export laws and congressional prohibitions against military aid to the Nicaraguan rebels. This 43-year-old military officer, whether acting on orders or unilaterally, has been blamed for the most serious crisis of the Reagan presidency. His is a story of a can-do Marine who went too far.

North's friends stress two things about him: that he is idealistic and intensely patriotic, and that he is a loyal military officer who executed the policies decided by his superiors, rather than operating as a rogue elephant. "Of the two kinds of ambitious people — those motivated by causes and those motivated by personal ambition — Ollie is motivated by causes. He is an idealist and a romantic," said Michael Ledeen, who was until recently National Security Council consultant on terrorism and worked closely with North in the early stages of the secret negotiations with Iran. Ledeen added, "I don't believe that North did anything in this that didn't reflect the convictions of his superiors."

"Ollie is not a cowboy", said Noel C. Koch, a former deputy assistant secretary of defense who supervised the Pentagon's special forces and antiterrorism programs until several months ago. "He's not the freebooter he's been made out to be. He's a prudent and deliberate officer . . . His first loyalty is to principle, then to his family and his friends."

North's critics argue that this devotion to principle sometimes got out of control and may even have led him to take the law into his own hands.

To his NSC colleagues, North seemed like a real-life Rambo. He was tough, courageous, contemptuous of the Washington institutions — Congress, the news media, the bureaucracy — that blocked the exercise of American power. He seemed to embody the strong, self-confident image that the Reagan administration wanted to present to the world.

North's gung-ho manner was not a pose. Born in San Antonio, Texas, he initially was a pre-med student at Rochester and then transferred to the Naval Academy, where he was graduated in 1968. He was the academy boxing champion and company commander in his senior year. The academy's 1968 yearbook,"Lucky Bag," said of him, "No matter where his career may lead, he knows his thoughts will always be: the Corps, the Corps, the Corps."

After graduation, North distinguished himself in Vietnam, winning a Silver Star and a Bronze Star for valor under fire. He also received two Purple Hearts, and he still walks with a slight limp because of his combat wounds. Details of his war record are hard to come by, but he apparently was part of the CIA-run covert war in Indochina. North told one acquaintance that he had survived one of his war wounds only because he was carried to safety on a makeshift stretcher by some of the fighters he had trained and led into battle.

"Ollie thinks in terms of life and death, and there are people to whom he owes his life", Ledeen said. Some of his friends claim, for example, that North's life was saved once in Asia by retired Air Force major general Richard V. Secord. Recent news reports have alleged that Secord was involved in two of North's secret NSC operations: the Iran arms deal and covert aid for the contras.

North joined the NSC staff in August 1981. His subsequent career proved to be an extreme version of something that has become common on the NSC staff in recent years: the rise of the can-do military man. He originally went to the NSC on temporary assignment (with a strong recommendation from Navy Secretary John F. Lehman Jr.) to help lobby for Senate approval of the sale of Airborne Warning and Control System (AWACS) radar-surveillance planes to Saudi Arabia. But he soon made himself indispensable.

"He was an incredible worker, very reliable, always there," recalled Geoffrey Kemp, a former NSC senior director for the Middle East who is with the Carnegie Endowment for Peace. "In the first few years, he would rarely open his mouth during a meeting. But he got things done. The briefing books were always there. The phone calls were made. The Situation Room was briefed."

From North's base on the NSC's military staff, he became involved in Middle East policy, then in the Falklands War, then in planning the invasion of Grenada, then in developing the administration's antiterrorism policy and finally in coordinating U.S. aid to the contras. He was promoted to deputy director for political-military affairs, a job that gave this officer enormous power in the bureaucracy. By this year, he had served on the NSC staff longer than nearly anyone else, and he understood how to use — and abuse — the policy process.

When a fellow Marine, Lt. Col. Robert C. (Bud) McFarlane, became national security adviser, North's position was enhanced. North was also aided by a bureaucratic stroke of luck. His secretary was the daughter of McFarlane's secretary. "If Ollie wanted to get in to see Bud, it was just a question of the daughter calling up her mother to set up an appointment," said one administration official who worked closely with North.

North's usefulness as a secret operative increased for McFarlane because of the gridlock that developed on major policy issues between Secretary of State George P. Shultz and Secretary of Defense Caspar W. Weinberger. The foreign-policy situation "made it impossible to function at all, except in secret," according to Koch, the former Pentagon antiterrorism official. The lesson for North, Koch said, was: "If you're going to do anything bold or innovative, you're going to have to do things through irregular channels."

The contras had become a consuming passion for North by early 1984. He traveled often to Honduras to visit their training camps and talked regularly — sometimes several times a day — with one of their leaders, Adolfo Calero. North would animatedly tell people about some of the contra fighters he met, men like Tigrillo, who had broken from the Sandinistas, joined the resistance and been wounded in combat.

As the secret war in Nicaragua became more controversial, North became more determined to stay the course. He was intensely loyal to those whose careers had been harmed by the war. Following the 1984 flap over a CIA-sponsored manual for the contras that advocated assassination, North helped arrange a job on the NSC staff for Vincent Cannistraro, the CIA officer who had run the agency's taskforce on the contras. And he helped find a job for the former army officer who had written the assassination manual for the CIA and was then fired by the agency.

When Congress voted to cut off funds for the contras in 1984, North took it as a personal blow. Friends say that he regarded the Boland Amendment — which made it illegal for the United States to finance the anti-Sandinista rebels, directly or indirectly — as a betrayal of people whom the United States had recruited and trained. The money ran out in mid-1984, and the contras were broke. One of the contra leaders was so starved for cash that he had mortgaged his wife's house in Miami, North complained to one acquaintance last year.

North's initial answer to the contras' money crunch was to help raise private contributions. He traveled the globe in late 1984 and early 1985 seeking donations. The cash flow last year totaled about $1 million a month, according to one source. One man who knows the details of North's 1985 fund-raising effort described it this way: "Adolfo Calero has been introduced to people in various countries who are sympathetic to the cause of democracy. They have decided after being introduced to him to make donations. They are provided with information about how to contribute."

This system for funding the contras was somewhat shaky and unreliable. But an alternative source of funds apparently emerged late last year, when North became involved in the sale of weapons to Iran. According to statements made by Meese, North was aware of a skimming operation that diverted $10 million to $30 million in profits on the Iran arms deal to a Swiss bank account, from which money was drawn to support the Nicaraguan rebels.

The Iran operation grew out of North's other preoccupation: the war against terrorism. It was in this area that North had some of his greatest successes and ultimately his costliest failure. North's finest hour, according to several colleagues, was his role in the capture of the Palestinians who hijacked the Italian cruise ship, Achille Lauro. After the ship docked in Egypt and the hostages were released, North dropped his plans for a military rescue mission at sea. But he kept watching the situation. When the NSC received intelligence reports that the terrorists planned to fly from Egypt to Tunisia on a chartered Egyptair plane, North realized that he had an opening.

"We can do an Admiral Yamamoto," North exclaimed to one of his NSC colleagues. He was referring to Japanese Adm. Isoroku Yamamoto, who was ambushed in flight by American planes in 1942. North planned the interception of the Egyptair plane and its forced landing in Italy from beginning to end. Hoping that the United States would be able to capture the terrorists and bring them to trial in America, he obtained arrest warrants from the Justice Department, a colleague recalled.

It was a bravura performance, but North also made a characteristic mistake. He did not think through clearly the political implications of the operation for Egypt and Italy — the Italian government fell shortly thereafter and bad blood between Washington and Cairo persisted for months. North did not seek the advice of regional specialists who might have offered useful political insights. When the specialists finally arrived late that night, North is said to have greeted them with relief.

For North, the United States was at war with terrorism. He helped draft a 1984 National Security Decision Directive that committed the administration to a tougher antiterrorism strategy, and he supervised the increased antiterrorism efforts that followed last year's TWA Flight 847 hijacking. North also took charge of efforts to free American hostages in Lebanon. That responsibility eventually led him into the past year's secret round of negotiations with the enemy — Iran.

North's tendency to overdramatize himself was evident in some of his antiterrorism activities. One source described North's agitated reaction several months ago when the new government of France's conservative prime minister, Jacques Chirac, was shaken by terrorist bomb attacks in Paris. "Chirac will fall," North is said to have warned colleagues melodramatically. "We have to send in our forensics people to help him. We have to save him." North apparently did not understand that dispatching a team of FBI agents at that delicate moment might have hurt Chirac more than it helped him, the source said.

For all his secrecy about his foreign travels, North was sometimes surprisingly open about his work. Last December, for example, he testified in the trial of former NSC aide Thomas C. Reed, who was later acquitted on charges of securities violations. At one point in his 10-page testimony, North remarked: ". . . I just returned from overseas, where we are trying to effect the recovery of the five Americans who are missing in Beirut."

It is North's tendency to overdramatize himself — the sense he conveys that he is starring in his own movie — that may have gotten him in such trouble. One of his close friends recalled a gathering not long ago at the headquarters of the Republican National Committee. The subject was aid for the contras and the guests included some prominent diplomats, politicians and defense intellectuals. The discussion was somewhat academic. North finally exploded in anger and impatience. "Ollie went ballistic," the friend said. He told the group: 'You're sitting here having a nice quiet lunch while people in Nicaragua are dying.' He was trying to make people understand what the world is like."

North operated with the same ferocious sense of mission, and the same contempt for the people who sit in armchairs watching the action, in nearly everything he did. That zealousness finally landed him in the midst of a criminal investigation exploring whether, in his secret operations with Iran and the contras, he broke the law.

North's friends argue that the NSC aide conducted his secret missions with a conviction that he was right and that he was serving President Reagan. Observed North's friend Koch:"Whatever he was, he was the president's man."

Staff writer Tom Vesey and special correspondent John Kennedy in New York contributed to this report.



Outstanding Carmen — Sally Burgess

Queen of the gas-guzzlers

CARMEN set in a car-dump, you might call it. Faced with the task of devising a production for Bizet's opera to hit us between the eyes but on the lowest possible budget, David Pountney for the English National Opera has put his faith in derelict gas-guzzlers of the swinging sixties as the main props set out the bare stage whether at the barracks, Lillas Pastia's, up in the hills or by the bull-ring. Not for nothing was Esso (UK) sponsor of the new production.

Zany as the concept might seem, it works surprisingly well. With a great hoarding of a Carmen figure spanning the back of the stage, a sort of cigarette advertisement, the cars below still keep something of their flashy glamour. They make a marvellous fantasy world for children to play in, and with enormous contingents from William Ellis and Parliament Hill Schools the first scene (to misquote Thurber) has kids the way most people have mice.

They swarm about, and no more think of doing military drill than the posse of soldiers in their sloppy fatigues, rudely disciplined under their abrasive, Norman Tebbit-figure of a Captain, memorably played by Richard Angas, showering contempt all round.

Don José, as played by John Treleaven, is an unromantic character, very much the spoiled priest forced into joining the army, a point well brought out in Anthony Burgess's new translation. That background of loyalty helps to restore what, with so slack an army, might lose its impact, the life-and-death nature of José's choice over escaping with Carmen.

And what a Carmen she is. In an earthily physical portrayal Sally Burgess makes her aggressively provocative, tarty like her fellow-workers in the cigarette factory, but glamorous. And as though her appearance and totally involved acting were not enough, Miss Burgess emerges in her new mezzo

By Edward Greenfield

status singing with a richness and command that puts her in a new category.

In her soprano days she was always a striking singer, but now the voice has acquired an extra warmth, firmness and individuality to make it very special, whether in the flamboyant numbers of Act 1 or the haunted menacing of the Card Song in Act 3. Her very first exchanges with Don José — brutally economical in this version of the text as used at the first 1875 performance — come over like a whiplash, with the rest of the performance to match.

The projection and volume of Miss Burgess's singing rather put the others to shame. John Treleaven, lacking a rounded quality in the voice, yet rises well to the challenge of the Flower Song, intense within his dogged characterisation. David Arnold, the black Escamillo, arrives like a pop-star in his pink zoot-suit, though the voice, firm and well-focused, doesn't project as strongly as his appearance. It is rather the opposite with Rosamund Illing as Micaela, a diminutive figure who sings with real passion.

What comes out well are the ensembles, not just those with children, which are a riot, but the other choruses too (also well-peopled), while the quintet of Act 3 is a delight, with car-seats drawn up to simulate a journey for the first hectic half and a sudden braking before the second, reflective half.

Mark Elder's speeds are sometimes too hectic as in the opening prelude done with no warning, house lights up, but that is on the right side for a production which above all has speed and energy. One great merit of the car-dump setting (designed by Maria Bjornson) is that it allows the piece to whizz through with only one interval and the slightest of pauses between acts.

More than once the updating threatens to make political or symbolic points (the removal of Carmen's face from the hoarding for the second half for example) but happily Mr Pountney in his ingenuity has concentrated on telling the story clearly. Done like that Carmen remains as unsinkable a show as the opera-house has to offer.

Fringe benefits

CINEMA by Derek Malcolm

SEVERAL of the films which helped to make the 30th London Festival a record-breaker open this week, and in my slightly weary book, pride of place must go to Nadia Tass's *Malcolm* (15) which one or two thought had been placed in the Festival as a joke.

In fact it has since won a bevy of Australian Film Awards, and rightly so, being a comedy of much charm and skill that also has an extremely relevant point to make. It treads some thin ice brilliantly, being the story of a "retarded" man who proves a great deal more advanced than his fellows when it comes to robbing a bank, and even just living.

Actually, there are two fringe people in Malcolm. One is Malcolm (Colin Friels) and the other is Frank (John Hargreaves), a semi-literate wide-boy who becomes his lodger after mother has died, brings his girlfriend with him (Lindy Davies) and is aghast to find his simple landlord capable of inventing walking ashcans, cars which split in two and other mechanical toys which can be used to make a fortune, or at least to take it.

What is so notable about a film so determinedly small-scale is the way Tass makes it as much a morality play as caper movie. A less firm and sure hand on the tiller might well have been disastrous. For once we see a comedy which says something right down to the bottom line, which is that it is better to rob banks than to treat the unwhole with contempt.

Cleverly, and with all the humanity that is absolutely necessary, Tass and her colleagues have managed an accomplished critique of Australian society and a warm and charming entertainment, which also contains a beautifully judged performance from Friels in its tricky central role. It wasn't for nothing that the projectionists at the National Film Theatre, having slogged through 100 films or so during the 18 days at the Festival, gave Malcolm their Golden Sprocket Award.

Friels appears to somewhat less effect in Tim Burstall's *Kangaroo* (PG) a brave but not entirely successful stab at translating D. H. Lawrence's uneven Australian novel to the screen. The film is high, wide and very handsome (Panavision photography by Dan Burstall) and is as much a dissection of Lawrence's marriage as a treatise on an Australia which seems a willing prey to right-wing attitudes and subversion.

The outstanding performance comes not from Friels, as the shadow of Lawrence himself, but from Judy Davis as Harriet Frieda, who won Best Actress at the Australian Film Awards for a part which she manages to make central to the proceedings.

Peter Ormrod's *Eat The Peach* (PG) is one of the most successful wholly Irish features ever made. And, one would suspect from its prize at the Taormina Festival, that it should travel well too. Like Malcolm, some of whose lightness of touch it emulates, Eat The Peach is a fluent comedy with a point to it, which has a central character trying to get up from under a society intent on pushing him down.

It is uneven and by no means entirely satisfactory. But it has one extremely precious gift — that of getting audiences to warm to it. They came out smiling.

Places in the heart

Michael Billington on Ghosts

WATCHING David Thacker's exciting production of Ibsen's Ghosts, which has now moved from the Young Vic to Wyndham's, I was struck by how starved we have lately been of strong, clear revivals of great plays (Cheek by Jowl's The Cid is an honourable exception). As the audience's Bravos coursed round the theatre, it also hit me that a miniature Ibsen season might prove extremely popular: I yearn to see some of the lesser-known plays, such as The Pretenders, The Master Builder and When We Dead Awaken, intelligently conjoined.

What makes Thacker's Ghosts exceptional is the casting of Vanessa Redgrave and Tom Wilkinson as Mrs Alving and Pastor Manders: for once we are confronted not by a sedately ageing couple but by two people still young enough to make their past brush with romance a potent memory.

Mrs Alving here even nuzzles Manders's ear in a vain attempt to rekindle old fires; the impact of this is tremendous. It reminds us that Manders, so anchored to convention that he has rejected Helena Alving, has committed the ultimate Ibsen sin: to quench the love-life in a human heart. It also underscores the fact that Mrs Alving, in returning to a life of marital sham and deceit with her dissolute husband, has sealed her son's fate.

It is, of course, a great play. But the difficulty in the theatre is that it can often seem as if the characters are simply sitting there waiting for the curse of the past to fall on them like a tent. Here you glimpse alternative possibilities. Vanessa Redgrave's brilliant Mrs Alving brims with maternal passion for Oswald but also the vaguely-nurtured hope that she might ensnare Pastor Manders: this makes the tragedy of the doomed climax, when she squats with head held between quivering hands, all the more searing.

Ever since her first appearance in The Lady From The Sea at 24, Ms Redgrave has always been a fine Ibsen actress precisely because she allows instinctive feeling to play against the interlocking tightness of the old master's plots.

Tom Wilkinson as Manders also follows Shaw's advice to play even unsympathetic or ludicrous characters as if they were justified in everthing they did. His Manders is, to the life, the businessman-cleric at ease in the world of mortgages and endowments but, spiritually, still enthralled to a black-and-white moral code.

The other roles are well taken. Adrian Dunbar plays Oswald with a lean, fiery joie de vivre rather than the crushed look of a marked man. Peter Theedom's Engstrand is subtle and sly rather than an obviously comic manipulator. And Eve Matheson's Regina, from the way she panders to Manders with the footstool, lets you see the character's sexual wiliness. Shelagh Keegan's glaucous surround also hints at the world of rain-sodden fjords beyond the house. But the triumph of the evening is that, in Ibsen's world of fixed fates, the characters here seem buoyed up by a tenuous, moving optimism.

Under a northern light

Nicholas de Jongh on Rosmersholm

NOW I have been to Ibsen country and my knowledge of the emotional and physical climates of his plays has been transformed. Never again will names and place names seem trivial details.

Now I understand that Oswald's last mad cries for the sun are spoken by a man brought up on the west coast of Norway where it rains all the year round: the temperature never sinks to iciness but it never rises above the terrain of bleak greyness.

And it is to similar territory that Rebekka West, the dangerous anti-heroine of Rosmersholm arrives from her home town of Finmark: to us it is only a place name, but the Norwegians know Finmark as wild, unpeopled and desolate territory, culturally separate from the rest of the country.

Up there Lapps, people whose origins are Slavic, and who once enjoyed a reputation for witchcraft, predominate. Her mother's name — Gunvig — means, in Norwegian, "to do witchcraft," and Rebekka is described as "an enchanting little mermaid," by Ulrik Brendel. Mermaids, Norwegians traditionally believe, have magic potency but cannot fulfil their sexuality.

It is equally significant that her great antagonist, Kroll, says that she could bewitch anyone. It is not, therefore, only the white horses which haunt Romersholm, but a pathologically destructive young woman, whom Ibsen invested with capacities to enchant. We in Britain however, are unaware of these nuances.

Lubos Hruza, the designer of this revival in Norway's sumptuously beautiful marble and gilded National Theatre in Oslo, seems aware of all these allusions. His extraordinary, expressionistic set consists of a distorted cube, the room whose tilted ceilings enhance a sense of claustrophobia.

Even the windows are glazed so that they allow no view at all, save that of glazed light and shadow. The room with an opaque back wall which abruptly becomes translucent and polls of murky blue light makes the place seem likely some subterranean or dream-like chamber.

And there is a devastating coup de theatre at the play's conclusion, when Rebekka West, who has successfully urged Rosmer's disturbed wife into suicide, leads him to fulfil a suicide pact with her in the millrace.

Sadly, however, Pal Lokkeberg's production has far less inventive, thrilling or experimental verve than his designer's set. Thwarted and covert passion sustain Rosmersholm. As the secrets of Rebekka's past gradually seep out and into the awareness of Rosmer, we need to be made aware of the devastating impact that these revelations have upon Rosmer and Rebekka herself.

But Kjersti Homen's prim and handsome Rebekka, save for the moment when Kroll cracks her secret, is the model of unremitting primness and calm. It makes absolute sense to cast Rosmer (Swein Sturla Hungnes) as an exceedingly handsome, young man — for this gives the play the chance of erotic commitment which it often lacks, but Mr Hungnes acts as if he were modelling charm and reasonableness alone.

This production suggests that the Norwegians, like the English, still approach Ibsen with literal-minded reverence. The play's design shows there are other, better ways. The limitations of the production suggest that the Norwegians stifle the inherent sexuality of Ibsen's plays: if the Norwegians have a chance to see Vanessa Redgrave's superlative Mrs Alving — only thawed at the climax — they will see there is an alternative.

Epics from the Promised Land

Waldemar Januszczak on why Cecil B. De Mille found David Roberts's work so sympathetic

CECIL B. De MILLE admired the work of David Roberts. In Roberts's views of the Holy Land, De Mille found architectural perspectives marching as purposefully towards the horizon as Israelites leaving Egypt; he saw columns thicker than an elephant's waist holding up keystones the size of a small mountain in Galilee. De Mille, you fancy, recognised a man after his own heart.

So he used Roberts as an uncredited artistic director on his Biblical extravaganzas. The columns pushed apart by Victor Mature in Samson and Delilah were Roberts's columns. That magnificently phoney Egypt left behind by a massive exodus of chanting extras was Roberts's Egypt.

After a century out of favour with the critics, Roberts has spent the past decade growing in popularity. The prices his works now fetch in auction would budget a small Hollywood movie. Was posterity wrong, therefore, to dismiss him for so long as a phoney peddler of pseudo-biblical kitsch?

The answer on this evidence is yes, with the hasty proviso that it is not at all difficult to see how the mistake was made.

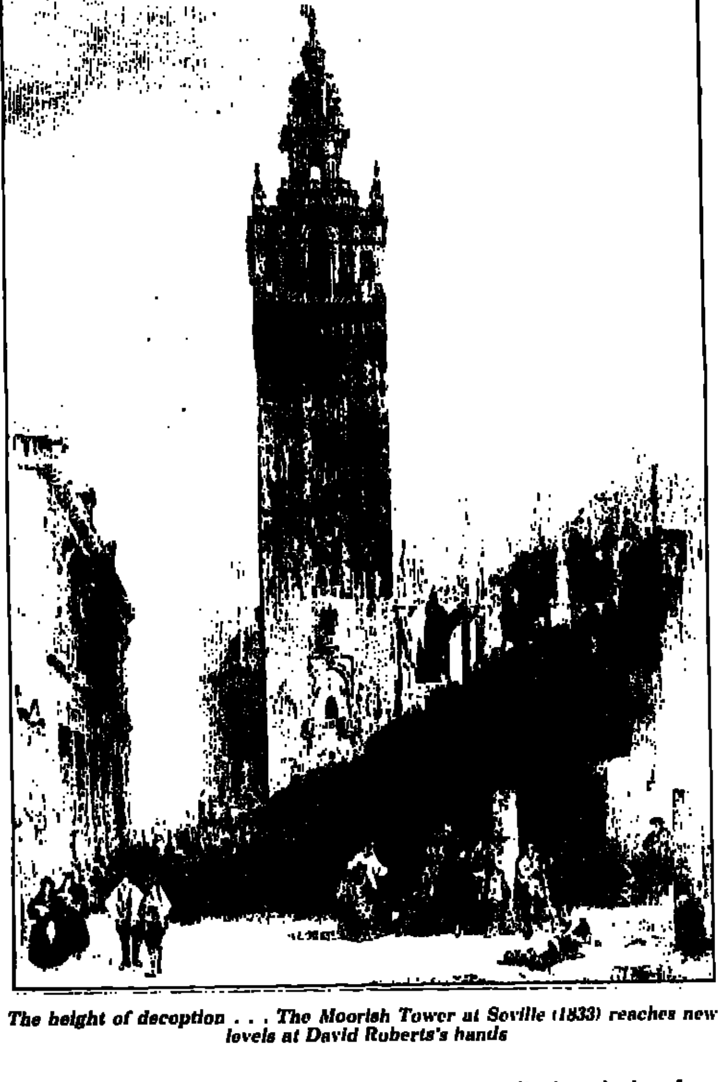
What was it that attracted a cigar-puffing megalomaniacal Jewish film director from Hollywood, to a dour Presbyterian Scot from Stockbridge, Edinburgh, across such a hopelessly wide cultural, temporal and geographic divide?

Clearly De Mille and Roberts shared a fondness for theatrical excess. And the God they believed in would have been nicely played by Orson Welles in a long white beard.

Roberts's famous panoramas of Egypt and the Holy Land seem to demand oohs and aahs from the audience. His pictures are determined to take your breath away. The artist tries every pictorial trick in the book, from the dramatically plunging perspective to the lonely ruin on a hill, to make every scene a scene-stealer.

He learned how to be a ham in the London theatre where he worked for 15 years as a scene-painter. At the Barbican his art seems to consist entirely of dramatic soliloquies. Even his sketches are still miniatures which shun intimacy.

Was there ever a more melodramatic and ridiculous Rome than the one observed glowing like a coalfire across a good acre in the giant picture belonging to the Scottish National Gallery? I am not at all surprised that the SNG keeps this picture hidden away: if paintings could talk, this one would drench everyone in the front row with spittle.



The height of deception . . . The Moorish Tower at Seville (1833) reaches new levels at David Roberts's hands

Walking into Antwerp Cathedral he discovered a vertiginous Gothic choir at least 20 feet taller than the original. In Venice he made tiny canals as wide as the Thames while in London the Thames itself is dwarfed by a Tower of London which has narrowed and grown to the height of an Alp.

Roberts was certainly not the first view painter to tamper so extensively with the facts in order to heighten the drama of a scene. The father of all view painters, Canaletto, did so just as wilfully — if a lot less noticeably.

Roberts (1796-1864) is unique in that his career happened to fall at such an inopportune moment, just before European art made truth to nature its central aesthetic concern. It was that concern that united the Impressionists in Paris with the Pre-Raphaelites in London, the writings of Zola with the paintings of Holman Hunt.

Examining the Scottish topographer's view of the Sphinx, Holman Hunt complained loudly that the sun was in the wrong place. "The gondoliers!" gasped John Ruskin indignantly at Roberts's view of Santa Maria della Salute in Venice — "always where they couldn't possibly row."

It would be unfair to keep judging Roberts by the standards of Ruskin and Hunt, which were excessively pious. Roberts may have imagined buildings that were much taller than in reality but at least, unlike Hunt, he did not claim to have wrestled nightly with the devil. Besides, has there ever been a view painter who did not add a few inches to the height of his cliffs and a few feet to the width of his rivers?

At the Barbican there are other and better reasons for shaking one's head in disbelief at the prices Roberts's work commands, and for dismissing his contribution to British art as a third rate one.

Large, un-edited and therefore unforgiving, the Barbican show underlines at every step what an awful figure painter he was. Colourful characters, Bedouins, Israelites, Arabs, farmers, Kings, are pushed stiffly around the foregrounds of his pictures like stage props. "Thus we have been encumbered with caftans, pipes, scimitars, and black hair, when all that he wanted was a lizard, or an ibis," complained Ruskin.

If you compare Roberts's view of Rouen Cathedral with one of the famous sketches of the same facade by Monet, produced a mere generation later, you are comparing anecdote with vision, an inert architecture worked out with rulers and perspective lines, with real Gothic stone-work soaked in sunlight.

Roberts's most common pictorial ambition is to make the spectator feel small and the buildings large. Unfortunately the low roof of the badly designed Barbican gallery makes it impossible to hang any of his large paintings at the height for which they were intended. The result is a silly perspective which makes his foreground figures appear too large and forces his towering buildings to lean away as precariously as the tower of Pisa.

If Roberts was unusually good for a British painter at sampling the dark, sumptuous, guilt-ridden interiors of Catholic cathedrals (as good as anyone before Burra) he was unusually bad for a British painter at painting the weather.

There is no weather in his art, no heat in his Holy Land, no damp in his London. As F. T. Palgrave so rightly complained, Roberts's art is bathed in "one sunlight . . . one atmosphere."

For a man applauded in his time and ours as a visual explorer who travelled the world, the inability to tell one place from another is surely an unforgivable failing.

David Roberts at the Barbican until January 4.

Individuals and the Cold War

ARMED TRUCE: Beginnings of the Cold War 1945-46, by Hugh Thomas (Hamish Hamilton, £14.95).

HUGH THOMAS is the first British historian in recent times to attempt the daunting task of chronicling and explaining "the Creation" (as Dean Acheson blasphemously called it), the postwar moment when the contemporary international order was formed. And he plans to do it on a grand scale. Armed Truce is but the first of several planned volumes on the Cold War.

It is a courageous enterprise and one to be welcomed; for there comes a time when mature historians should escape from monograph and biography and address themselves to the great themes of war and peace. One is reminded of E. H. Carr, an historian at the opposite pole, who similarly began his life's work (14 volumes on the Soviet Revolution) at the age of fifty.

While others have surveyed part of the postwar terrain — Peter Calvocoressi, Geoffrey Barraclough, Geoffrey Warner, Alan Bullock — most of the work (appropriately enough) has been monopolised by American historians and polemicists. Now we have a genuine British version of that era, one that could have been recommended by Sir Keith Joseph for use in the centralised curricula sixth forms of the future.

By Richard Gott

Hugh Thomas is a distinguished historian whose reputation rests solidly on his two major works dealing with war in Spain and revolution in Cuba. Beyond that, however, he is also wayward, maverick, and dilettante (words used with care — and admiration), an historian who investigates what interests him and skates over what doesn't, who is at least as concerned to tell a good story as to get it right, and who never lets the absence of evidence deter him from voicing a trenchant opinion. The result is stimulating, entertaining, and readable — though the argument is not always convincing.

He dismisses the revisionist historians who have sought to blame the West for the onset of the Cold War, but at the same time, he doesn't exactly endorse the old Establishment line that it was all the fault of the Russians. Whereas forty years ago it was commonplace to assume that Stalin was interested in promoting world revolution, the general belief nowadays is that his aims were pretty limited. Hugh Thomas seeks a synthesis of these two views, and enshrines his thesis in a complicated formulation: "The combination of the extreme subtlety of the Marxist-Leninist philosophy with the brute force of Communist methods made for policies which needed the appearance at least of conflict."

Stalin, according to this view, needed the Cold War — the existence of an external enemy — to carry out his policies for running the Soviet Union. And, suggests Hugh Thomas, all this was made crystal clear in a speech on February 9, 1946, which effectively restated the "Socialism In One Country" policy of the 1920s. Goodbye to wartime allies, goodbye to international cooperation. The Soviet Union was going to go it alone.

"Now that the great war against Germany was over," writes Thomas, Stalin "could return to revive his Party, embellish the ideology where necessary, shut down relations with the outside world, except where that was inconvenient (rather as Japan had done in the 17th century) until reconstruction was complete." Usefully for his argument, this speech was given just four weeks before Winston Churchill's "iron curtain" address at Fulton, Missouri, on March 5, 1946, an occasion often used as the starting date of the Cold War.

Stalin's decision to go isolationist, if that is what it was, baffled Western opinion at the time. Yet it should not have seemed all that unusual since the United States, after all, had taken a similar route after the previous war. But the prevailing feeling at the time was that the Soviet Union must either be an ally, or an enemy. If it was the latter there would be another war.

It didn't occur to anyone that there could be a path between those two. Neither war nor peace, writes Thomas, was "a concept too complicated for most of that era's public servants." So the Cold War began, the peculiar genius of Stalin's policies lying — in the Thomas version — in the fact that blame for this twilight conflict could cheerfully be laid at the door of the capitalists and the imperialists.

This is good controversial stuff, but a mere revision of revisionism is not Hugh Thomas's sole aim. Another ambition is to put individuals back into history. "The development of technology under the control of governments," he claims, has placed vast power in the hands of individuals. We should therefore, he argues, know more about them.

This is an intriguing idea, suitable for an historian emerging from the heart of Thatcherism. What we actually get is a series of vignettes of major and minor figures in the post-war drama, thumbnail sketches which prove to be good, bad, or indifferent depending more on the writer's mood than because he is giving their role or their evidence any particular weight.

David Lilienthal, for example, takes over the State Department's advisory panel on nuclear energy, and is described as "brilliant, imaginative, sympathetic, and liberal." So far, so good. Then we are told that he was the son of Jewish immigrants from Moravia, "of the same stock, therefore, as Mahler, Freud, Mach, Schoenberg, Zweig, and so many other men of genius."

This is an interesting sideglance at the nature and achievements of Moravian Jewry, but its relevance to the postwar attempts to bring nuclear weapons under international control is not made clear. What it seems to show is that even when a genius is put in charge, the forces of history are more powerful than the efforts of individuals — which is not what Hugh Thomas set out to argue.

Hugh Thomas is a Tory peer, ennobled by Margaret Thatcher, but apart from the obligatory anti-Sovietism, this is not Thatcherite history. It certainly wouldn't appeal to Mrs Thatcher herself. Indeed, at a guess, she belongs to the Eddy Shah/Henry Ford school of thinking it's all bunk. Nothing much interesting happened until she came along.

The two contemporary politicians who might enjoy this book are Roy Jenkins and David Owen, perhaps a sign that Hugh Thomas, as an historian, is still really a social democrat at heart.

Escaping from one nightmare into another

CAMBODIAN WITNESS: The autobiography of Someth May (Faber, £9.95).

By Salman Rushdie

WHEN horror becomes unimaginable, it wins its final victory, because when the imagination is overwhelmed we begin to give up, to shrug our shoulders, to accept the omnipotence of evil.

The Holocaust, the Partition massacres in the Punjab, the satanic mushrooms of Hiroshima and Nagasaki have all pushed reality close to this point of incomprehensibility. In this century it has often seemed that subjects too colossally vile to be grasped, things *beyond words*, have come into the world, like forerunners of apocalypse.

The people of Cambodia have been the victims of not one, but two such nightmares. The first lasted for three years. This was the saturation bombing unleashed by Henry Kissinger, during which the equivalent of five Hiroshima bombs fell from the skies. (And one week after the bombing stopped, Nixon made Dr Strangelove his new Secretary of State.)

The second was the reign of Pol Pot and the Khmer Rouge, whose power, as William Shawcross said in Sideshow, was "born out of the inferno." In four years, the Khmer Rouge were responsible for the deaths of between one-and-a-half and three million Cambodians. As the father of Someth May, author of *Cambodian Witness*, told him before he was killed: "There is no end to revenge."

Are such crimes beyond literature? To admit it feels like surrender. But they are almost certainly beyond the scope of any single book, beyond the imaginative grasp of any one author. The growing body of Holocaust literature shows how even so unspeakable a thing may, finally, begin collectively to be articulated.

But the articulation of the Jewish nightmare, from Anne Frank to Elie Wiesel, has been uniquely thorough. Knowledge depends on economic resources, and on continued international interest, on "news values." Cambodia can't command either. James Fenton say in his introduction to Cambodian Witness: "Although there have been several books by Westerners, very little of the story has been told by Cambodians themselves."

The reasons he gives for this — the death of many Cambodian writers, the traumatic nature of the experience — are obviously a part of the explanation, but more important is power, or rather, powerlessness. Any new book on Cambodia must at present overcome the objection: "Oh, I know all that; I saw The Killing Fields."

As if one version could stand for all, and all the dead had the same tale to tell. The distinction of Someth May's autobiography lies in its insistence on the right of each death, each life, to its own particular meaning. He writes a calm, declaratory prose whose emotional detachment is, at times, a little unnerving:

Comrade Thol . . . had a thorny stick in his hand, with which he was whipping his father as they went. The father squealed in agony. His uniform was drenched with blood . . . News soon spread that Comrade Thol had killed his whole family — his father first . . . He was rewarded with an AK-47, of which he was very proud. He came round the fields to show it off.

But its simplicity is a necessary strategy in the face of the terror, and also something more, something like an act of civilised moderation in response to so much barbarity and excess.

The first part of Cambodian Witness is an evocative account of family life before the victory of the Khmer Route. Someth's family came from "Kampuchea Krom," now conquered by Vietnam, so they knew something about displacement. At the age of four, Someth was sent "to the pagoda" to be educated, but he hated it so much that he ran away. According to his parents' beliefs, this meant that "he would ruin the fortunes of his family for a generation."

The young Someth gambles with rubber bands, is made to kneel on jak-fruit skin by a sadistic schoolmaster, and learns maths from Khieu Samphan, later one of the Khmer Rouge leadership. A friend is possessed by a devil and a *lok kru* or magician exorcises him, in a scene reminiscent of Isaac Bashevis Singer. The rituals of Cambodian life are described: his sister's wedding, the funeral of a brother who dies in a traffic accident. Then the city falls, and the Khmer Rouge come.

"Of the fourteen people who left Phnom Penh in the evacuation, only four survived." In the Year Zero of "Democratic Kampuchea," Someth's father cannot survive, because he is a doctor, and the Khmer Rouge, with their hatred of intellectuals, are killing doctors. His sister Somaly and her husband Phan, whose wedding was described in an earlier chapter, are "mortared to death" in a field macabrely named "the infirmary." Someth's brothers die of starvation. His sister, Mealea, the cleverest, cannot resist writing in a journal what she thinks of the "black crows," as she calls the Khmer Rouge:

Now I really hate this regime. It turns men into animals . . . I wish I had been born in another country . . . I love my country . . . But this is what this regime has made me wish.

The journal is found, and Mealea dies in the terrifying "Re-education Centre," and Someth writes a brief, moving epitaph. "But at least she had spoken her mind. She had been true to her philosophy."

The worst thing that happens in Cambodian Witness, happens to a monkey. The lame, fastidious Comrade Tek shows Someth "the way I used to kill the Lon Nol soldiers." He cuts open the monkey's stomach and pressed the cut with both hands. The monkey's liver falls out in one piece. Comrade Tek then slits the monkey's throat.

"Every time I think of it," Someth writes, "I imagine my father was killed in the same way." Comrade Tek has explained that the technique is slightly different when killing a man. "I would have put my foot in the cut to get the right pressure — otherwise the liver never comes out properly."

There is no adequate response to such material, except to marvel that anyone could have retained his humanity in such a world. For this is a very humane book, and contains numerous portraits of the survival of the human spirit, even in hell. In particular, it is about the love within Someth's mutilated family; and it is remarkable that such a book should end up being about love.

James Fenton's editing is, for the most part, discreet and self-effacing, though there are moments when I suspect that he had guided Someth May too far down the path of exoticism. In his introduction, he says: "For Someth, it is sometimes surprising to be asked to give details of daily life that to a Westerner will appear irresistibly exotic." Someth might, once or twice, have been right.

Neither Fenton nor the author, however, have been well served by their publisher. To make Fenton's name more prominent than Someth May's on the front of the jacket was an insulting piece of typography, and Faber ought to be ashamed. It makes the book look like what I feared it might be — a Western laundering of Eastern reality — and is not.

Someth May has written descriptively, not analytically, so the Cambodian political background is only sketched in. Nor does he answer the toughest question: how can men become like Comrade Tek? I don't know the answer, either. But the terrible lesson of our century is that *it isn't difficult*. I could be Comrade Tek. And so could you.

Letters to the Editor are welcomed but not all can be acknowledged. We don't like cutting them but sometimes this is necessary to get them in the page — short letters stand a better chance. Send them to The Guardian Weekly, PO Box 19, Cheadle, Cheshire SK8 1DD England.

Bridge

By Rixi Markus©

FOR more years than I care to remember, I have been campaigning to convince television producers that there are thousands of bridge players in this country who are clamouring for attention. In 1938 we were the first country to produce a regular televised bridge programme, although the technical side was still primitive and very few people actually owned television sets. I appeared in a Friday night programme, partnered by another refugee from Vienna, Gertie Brunner. We were already world champions, and Hubert Phillips invited us to play against Mrs Cole and Mrs Millett, the best English ladies pair at that time.

With those early days still fresh in my mind, I'm pleased to welcome the BBC's latest effort at televised bridge. This is a 13-part series at 6.25pm on Saturdays on BBC-2, with the highlights of a hard fought rubber bridge battle between four international stars on board the liner Canberra. The players are well chosen: Arturo Franco of Italy, Zia Mahmood of Pakistan, Christian Mari of France, and Robert Sheehan of England.

The technical production of the new series is excellent, and Jeremy Flint is a first class commentator. But most viewers particularly in this country, will not know what Chicago Bridge means and will not understand the constant changing of partners. It seems to me that the principle of Chicago Bridge should have been explained rather better in the first programme, and we should also have been told what happened on the hands which were not shown in the programme but which were included in the running scores given at the end.

Four deals were shown in the first programme in the series, two of considerable interest. Here is one where Robert Sheehan produced a thoughtful and accurate defence to defeat Arturo Franco's part-score contract. Dealer South; love all.

NORTH
♠ A 9 6
♥ K 9 8 7
♦ A 10 4
♣ 9 8 5

WEST
♠ 3
♥ Q J 4 2
♦ J 5 2
♣ A Q J 7 4

EAST
♠ J 7 5 2
♥ A 6 3
♦ K 8 7 6 3
♣ 2

SOUTH
♠ K Q 10 8 4
♥ 10 5
♦ Q 9
♣ K 10 6 3

SOUTH	WEST	NORTH	EAST
Franco	Sheehan	Mari	M'mood
NB	1C	NB	1D
1S	NB	2S	NB
NB	NB		

Sheehan led the two of diamonds, ducked to his partner's king. East switched to the two of clubs, which was almost certainly a singleton, but West did not make the mistake of giving his partner an immediate club ruff. He switched to the queen of hearts first, and this allowed the defenders to take two heart tricks before West played the ace and another club to defeat the contract by one trick.

Notice that South has to find the heart switch to defeat the contract: if he returns a club first, declarer will be able to discard one of his losing hearts on the ace of diamonds.

Here is a hand on which Zia Mahmood failed to find the winning answer — a rare event indeed. Dealer West; North-South vulnerable.

NORTH
♠ K 8 5
♥ A J
♦ K 7 5 4
♣ A 9 5 3

WEST
♠ A 4
♥ 5 4
♦ 10 8 6 3 2
♣ K J 8 2

EAST
♠ Q J 10 2
♥ K 6 3
♦ 9
♣ Q 10 7 6 4

SOUTH
♠ 9 7 6 3
♥ Q 10 9 8 7 2
♦ A Q J
♣ —

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
Sheehan	Mari	M'mood	Franco
NB	1NT	NB	4H(1)
NB	NB	NB	

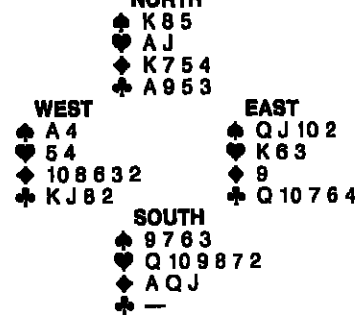
(1) This was an excellent bid by Arturo Franco. The unrevealing suction made the winning defence very hard to find.

West led a diamond against 4H, and declarer won in the closed hand and played a heart to dummy's jack, losing to East's king. The killing defence now is for East to switch to a spade, ruff his partner's diamond continuation and exit with a second spade, leaving declarer with an unavoidable fourth loser. In practice, Zia switched to a club (which would have been correct if South had held, say ♠ x x ♥ Q 10 9 x x x ♦ A Q J ♣ x x) and declarer had no further problems; he drew trumps and unblocked the diamonds, restricting his losers to two spades and one heart.

Chess

By Leonard Barden

No. 1936



White mates in three moves, against any defence (by G. Heathcote, 1891).

Solution No. 1935:
White K at KR1, Bs at Q8 and Q7, Black K at KR1, R at QN1, B at QB6. White to draw.

1 B-KR4 (not 1 B-B7 or K7 R-N2 and not 1 B-KN5 R-N2 2 B-B5 R-N4) R-N2 2 B-B5 R-N4 3 B-N4 R-N5 (skewering the bishops) 4 B-N3! RxB 5 B-K5 ch BxB stalemate.

NEMESIS struck England's bid for gold medals at the chess olympics in Dubai just as the team were within sight of a winning position. Following victories by 2½-1½ against the US, Hungary and Yugoslavia and a 2-2 draw against the USSR, England only needed to score solidly against the weaker teams. It looked very good when Iceland were crushed 4-0 and the tough Bulgarians outplayed 3-1.

At that stage, with five rounds left, England were 2½ points ahead of the USSR, with superior match points in the event of a tie; and were 1½-2 points in front of Hungary and the US. The Soviet team were in some disarray. Vaganian, a talented but sometimes inconsistent GM, was in a bad patch, while the veteran USSR champion Cheshkovsky, who has played most of his chess in Eastern Europe, seemed overawed by the strange environment.

So our round ten disaster, ½-3½ against the lowly rated Spaniards, was a total surprise. The experienced GMs Miles, Nunn and Chandler all lost, with Speelman salvaging a draw on bottom board. It is England's worst individual match result for many years, and can probably only really be explained on psychological grounds, the effect of the pressure of unexpectedly going for gold rather than silver.

In the England v USSR match the Russians were soon 0-2 down due to the crushing defeats given below. Their counterbalancing wins, Kasparov against Miles and Yusupov against Short, came through time pressure errors by the English GMs in tenable positions.

GM John Nunn (England) — GM Andrei Sokolov (USSR)
Sicilian Defence (Dubai olympics 1986)

1 P-K4 P-QB4	2 N-KB3 P-K3
3 P-Q4 PxP	4 NxP N-QB3
5 N-QB3 P-QR3	6 B-K2 P-Q3
7 B-K3 Q-B2	8 P-B4 N-QR4?
9 0-0 N-B5	10 BxN QxB
11 P-B5! B-K2	

The world number three's black strategy for such an important game is risky, to say the least. Black's early queen's side knight advance has been outmoded for half a century — since Emanuel Lasker's classic win over Pirc at Moscow in 1935. There (with transpositions) Black played N-B3 instead of B-K2, and Lasker won by 12 PxP PxP 13 RxN PxR 14 Q-R5 ch K-Q1 15 Q-B7 when his attack soon broke through.

12 Q-N4 P-KR4	13 Q-N3 B-B3
14 PxP PxP	15 P-K5! PxP
16 N-K4 Q-B2	

Black can only improvise a rickety defence. If PxN 17 N-Q6 ch.

17 Q-N3 N-K2	18 QR-Q1 P-R5
19 NxB ch PxN	20 Q-N7 R-B1
21 RxP! RxR	22 QxR Q-Q3

If PxN 23 RxP N-Q4 24 Q-R8 ch K-Q2 25 Q-N7 ch forces mate or decisive material gain after K-Q1 26 B-N5 ch or K-B3 26 R-B4 ch.

23 B-N5! PxN	24 RxP N-Q4
25 RxN Resigns	

If PxR 26 QxQ or if QxR 26 Q-K7 mate. John Nunn has scored many attacking wins against the Sicilian, and this miniature is reminiscent of some Keres classics of the 1950s.

GM Murray Chandler (England) — GM Rafael Vaganian (USSR)
French Defence (Dubai olympics 1986)

1 P-K4 P-K3	2 P-Q4 P-Q4
3 N-QB3 B-N5	4 P-K5 P-QN3
5 P-QR3 B-B1	6 N-B3 Q-Q2
7 B-QN5! P-QB3	8 B-R4 B-R3

White's seventh is an idea by Chandler and Short to counter Black's telegraphed plan to exchange light-squared bishops. It costs some time, but that is well justified by Black's own artificial development.

9 N-K2 P-R4	10 0-0 N-R3
11 R-K1 B-K2	12 P-B3 P-N3
13 N-B4 N-B4	14 N-R3 B-QN4
15 B-B2 P-B4	16 B-N5 N-B3?

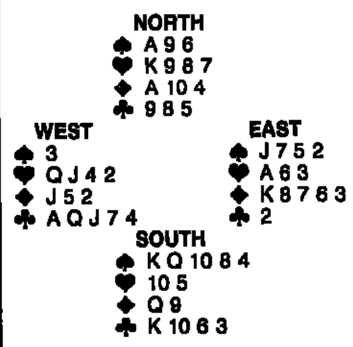
White's manoeuvres retain his active light-squared bishop and now he exchanges the other bishop pair to expose Black's dark-squared weaknesses. Vaganian misses that the apparently blocked position can be opened up — better BxB.

17 B-B6 BxB	18 PxB Q-Q1
19 PxP! PxP	20 N-B4 QxP

Suddenly Black's game is collapsing, for if K-B1 to avoid the pin on the open file, then 21 RxP!

21 QxP R-QB1	22 QxBP P-R3
23 P-QR4 N(3)-K2	24 N-Q5! Resigns

White mates after PxN 25 QxR or wins material after NxN 25 QxR ch or RxQ 25 NxQ ch and 26 PxB.



ARAUCARIA

ACROSS
9. Last of many to put the men off (9)
10. Singularly small amount of sea air? (5)
11. Author of 22 across is in a lot, take note (7)
12. Companion vessel gets journalist agitated (7)
13. Most uncommonly found in Arthur's queen (5)
14. Author of 23 across 22 across 24, a man on the road to China? (9)
16. Sailor, thus encountered at a USSR exhibition, displays bird's shank-bone (15)
19. 7 Comment on Byron suggests a little misquotation from Pope (9, 2, 4)
21. Author of 13 8 7 23 across 22 across 24 sounds complete (5)
22. Model students embrace barmaid at Edmonton pub (3, 4)
23. Doctor in class? (3, 4)
24. Taxes on bars? (5)
25. Retired writers: I've got one right (9)

DOWN
1. Having spoken violently I mend fault, perhaps (10)
2. Favourable judge with a very quiet dog? (8)
3. Routed a roundabout way? (6)
4. Not far to island (4)
5. Man and fellow-member in news agency; it has its points (3, 7)
6. Shakespeare hero's mother is nearly all the book in a mess (8)
7. See 19
8. Essex town in short dispatch (4)
14. Holy character with her holy pig? (10)
15. When the last sun rose you call gold between poles (10)
17. It's taken in one's armchair, by Cantonese as English (4, 4)
18. Wordworth's glorious birth from hens in US (8)
20. Piece of pine in 5 (6)
21. North Australian naturalist? (6)
22. Archbishop in a skirt? (4)
23. Basis for tender (4)

MONARCH ASTRIDE
P Q A C H E R
PIER PROFESSION
N E S N R T P
DIREST DARKROOM
O A E Y A U
INVERNESS DITTO
X C N
OFTEN DEPRESSED
O R D N E Y
CRACKERS PICKET
B I G I O R S
CENSORIOUS ATOM
A E E N I M R
BRISKET STOPPER

SOCCER: Stephen Bierley — Manchester Utd 3, Tottenham 3

Ferguson has an uphill road to climb

MESSAGE to all managers: Do not let your chairman be interviewed at half-time, especially if he is going to say his team is playing better than at any other time that season. Manchester United, 2-0 up at the interval, quickly found themselves 3-2 down. A late Davenport penalty saved them.

It was, of course, the sort of match the TV cats lap up and makes managers go home and kick the moggy. Defence, what defence? United lost McGrath, forcing the substitute Stapleton into the back four, which offered them some semblance of an excuse. Tottenham had none.

There were those people, when Alex Ferguson took over as manager, who imagined or liked to kid themselves he had inherited a strong squad of players. He has not. Everywhere — defence, midfield and attack — he has problems and he will thoroughly earn his first year's salary.

Whiteside and Davenport made sure United had just reward for their sharp efforts of the first half. On another day Clive Allen would have scored for Spurs in the opening minute, but it was a match of mistakes. Mabbutt and Paul Allen were both at fault for United's second, allowing Davenport to shoot obliquely in.

Mabbutt atoned in the second half, launching himself at Hoddle's corner to head past Turner. Moran, who should have scored between the goals of Whiteside and Davenport, finally found his touch but in the wrong net. A big question mark here against Turner who had slapped ineffectively at Hoddle's chipped shot. Poor Moran tried to clear, but sliced over his own line.

United's fans were hushed, their optimism dying with the light. United's defence slept. Waddle's cross was headed in by Clive Allen with Turner once again nowhere near the ball. And that looked to be that for Ferguson's team until Strachan, easily the pick of United's midfield, found Robson in space in Tottenham's penalty area.

Robson had a largely anonymous match, but Danny Thomas, on as substitute for Ardiles, smashed into the England captain as if he suspected Robson might be carrying a portion of his £125,000-a-year salary about his person. Clemence's fingertips clawed at Davenport's penalty but it was struck with enough force to beat the attempted save. Old Trafford erupted in heart-felt relief. It was a goal United scarcely deserved or the crowd expected.

Both managers are faced with restoring an image and satisfying a deep thirst for success. David Pleat's plans are a good deal further advanced than Ferguson's and look more likely to bear fruit first. United's problems run deep.

MANCHESTER UNITED: Turner; Sivebaek, Duxbury, Moses, McGrath (Stapleton, 28min), Moran, Robson, Strachan, Whiteside, Davenport, Olsen.
TOTTENHAM HOTSPUR: Clemence; P. Allen, Thomas, Roberts, Gough, Mabbutt, C. Allen, Galvin, Waddle, Hoddle, Ardiles (Thomas D. 67min).
Referee: D. Hutchinson (Harrogate).